

Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan

Annual Monitoring Report 2015-2016

Covering the period 1st April 2015 – 31st March 2016

Mae'r ddogfen yma ar gael yn y Gymraeg/This document is available in Welsh

CONTENTS		Page
	Executive Summary	3
1	Introduction	9
2	Monitoring Framework	11
3	Contextual Change	15
4	Local Development Plan Monitoring	28
5	Sustainability Appraisal Monitoring	64
6	Conclusions and Recommendations	87
Appendix 1	Status of LDP Allocations	93

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted on 2nd March 2011. As part of the statutory development plan process the Council is required to prepare an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR will provide the basis for monitoring the progress and delivery of the LDP, the Plan's sustainability credentials and it will also identify any significant contextual changes that might influence its implementation.

This is the fifth AMR to be prepared since the adoption of the Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP and provides a further opportunity for the Council to assess the impact the LDP is having on the social, economic and environmental well-being of the County Borough.

Key Findings of the Annual Monitoring Process 2015-2016

Contextual Change

This section looks at local, regional, national and international factors that have had an influence on land-use development in Rhondda Cynon Taf and subsequently on the implementation of the LDP during 2015-2016. These include:

A. National Policy, Guidance or Legislation:

- Planning (Wales) Act 2015;
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015;
- Environment (Wales) Act 2016;
- Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016;
- Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 – 2015 No. 1598;
- Planning Policy Wales Edition 8;
- TAN 4: Retail Centre Development (Proposed)
- TAN 12: Design
- Local Development Plan Manual (Edition 2), August 2015.

B. National Statistics and Policy Research:

- Exploring Methods for the Identification of Strategic Planning Areas, October 2015;
- Welsh Language Survey.

C. External Conditions:

- Small signs of recovery in the global economy;
- Slow and fluctuating growth in employment;
- Modest increase in national house building;
- Reductions in the public sector in Wales.

D. The Regional Development Context:

- The City Deal;
- National Development Framework;

- Strategic Development Plan;
- Update on LDPs in the Region (South East Wales).

E. The Local Development Context:

- Rhondda Cynon Taf Joint Housing Land Availability Study 2016;
- Local Economic Conditions;
- Public and Private Sector Funding and Investment.

Local Development Plan Monitoring

The results of the core and local output monitoring exercise for 2015-2016, provide an interesting and varied picture of development in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

In considering the successful implementation of the LDP, there are two main sectors of the economy that are particularly relevant, these being the operations of the housing and commercial markets. The most notable AMR findings in relation to these indicate that:

- 569 new dwellings were built in the County Borough during 2015-2016. This represents a 2.9% increase on the number of new dwellings constructed during 2014-2015 and a 6.5% increase on 2013-2014;
- 98 new affordable dwellings were built in the County Borough during 2015-2016. This represents a decrease of -14% of the affordable dwellings constructed during 2014-2015 but a 69.6% increase on the figure for 2013-2014;
- The Council approved proposals for 2,264 new dwellings during 2015-2016;
- Overall vacancy rates for Principal Town and Key Settlement retail centres were 10.6% during 2015-2016, which is a small decrease on the previous year's rates of 10.8%. This is however 2% above the UK average vacancy rate which stands at 8.7% as of January 2016.

Detailed consideration of the results of the monitoring exercise has allowed the Council to make an informed judgement about the nature of the progress that has been made during 2015-2016, in delivering the LDP targets and therefore its policies.

The result of the delivery of each of the monitoring targets is shown in the table overleaf (along with an explanation of the colour coding):

LDP MONITORING		
Core Policy Target		Result
CS 1	Development in the North	Amber
CS 2	Development in the South	Green
CS 3	Strategic Sites	Amber
CS 4	Housing Requirements	Red
CS 5	Affordable Housing	Red
CS 6	Employment Requirements	Red
CS 7	Retail	Green, Amber
CS 8	Transportation	Green, Amber
CS 9	Waste Management	Green
CS 10	Minerals	Green

The results of the monitoring process for 2015-2016 indicate that the targets in respect of 3 of the 10 core policies are *ongoing, being met or exceeded* (annotated in green) and 2 targets are *not currently being achieved, but the situation can be ameliorated without immediate intervention or sufficiently progressed not to require direct intervention* (annotated in amber). Policies CS 7 and CS 8 are being partially met and it is unlikely that intervention will be required to achieve these targets. 3 of the policy targets are not specifically being achieved and it is unlikely that this will be addressed without specific intervention.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Monitoring

The key findings of the SA Monitoring Process are outlined below:

- 37% of all new dwellings built over the year were on previously developed land.
- 99.95% of all new houses permitted during 2015-2016 are accessible and within 400 metres of at least one or more transport mode.
- 92.3%, of all new employment permitted is accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport mode.
- 100% of new retail development permitted is accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport modes.
- No highly vulnerable development was permitted in C2 flood-risk zones that did not meet all TAN 15 tests.

The result of the delivery of each of the SA monitoring targets is shown in the table below (along with an explanation of the colour coding):

SA MONITORING		
Targets		Result
SA 1	Housing	Amber
SA 2	Culture and Heritage	Green
SA 3	Communities	Green / Amber
SA 4	Health	Green
SA 5	Economy	Green
SA 6	Employment	Green
SA 7	Transport	Green
SA 8	Built Environment	Green
SA 9	Landscape	Green
SA 10	Biodiversity	Green
SA 11	Water	Green
SA 12	Climate Change	Green
SA 13	Energy	Green
SA 14	Land and Soils	Green
SA 15	Waste	Green
SA 16	Minerals	White
SA 17	Air Quality	Green

The results of the monitoring process indicate that the targets in respect of the vast majority of the sustainability indicators *are ongoing, being met or exceeded* (annotated in green), a minority of SA targets are *not currently being achieved but the situation can be ameliorated without immediate intervention or sufficiently progressed not to require direct intervention* (annotated in amber). The results also show that an indicator for minerals needs to be redefined (annotated in white) as it does not give the appropriate information required to assess the target.

Whilst the plan is still in the early stages of implementation, it is possible to make some broad predictions regarding how the plan is progressing in terms of sustainability. Overall, the plan is travelling in a positive direction for most aspects of sustainability, however in some cases the indicators suggest that further consideration may need to be given to how these targets can be achieved.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Whilst the pattern of growth in some areas is slower than anticipated at the time of writing; evidence collected through the monitoring process suggests that good progress is being made in the delivery of the majority of LDP targets relating to the implementation of the Plan's policies and allocations. It is anticipated that the development that has taken place in Rhondda Cynon Taf since the adoption of the LDP, coupled with the projected future investment from the public and private sector will ensure that the LDP core strategy is successfully delivered. The Annual Monitoring Reports will form part of the evidence used to inform the review of the LDP.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted on 2nd March 2011. The LDP provides a land use framework which forms the basis on which decisions about future development in the County Borough are based.
- 1.2 As part of the statutory development plan process the Council is required to prepare an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) and submit it to the Welsh Government by the 31st October each year. The AMR will provide the basis for monitoring the progress of the delivery of the LDP, the Plan's sustainability credentials and identify any significant contextual changes that might influence its implementation. The results of this monitoring process will feed into the ongoing analysis of the LDP, with the Council currently in the process of undertaking a formal review of the Plan. The results of this and the previous four AMRs will form a significant basis to this review.
- 1.3 This is the fifth AMR to be prepared since the adoption of the Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP and monitors the period between 1st April 2015 and 31st March 2016. It provides an important opportunity for the Council to assess the impact that the LDP is having on the social, economic and environmental well-being of the County Borough.
- 1.4 The structure of the AMR is as follows;
 - **Introduction** – outlines the requirement for, the purpose and structure of the AMR;
 - **Monitoring Framework** – explains the process of monitoring the LDP, how to quantify the resulting data and how the results of the monitoring process may inform the formal review process;
 - **Contextual Change** – analyses the potential impact of factors such as changes to national planning policy, the economic climate and local issues on the implementation of the LDP;
 - **Local Development Plan Monitoring** – provides an analysis of the effectiveness of the LDP policy framework in delivering the plans targets;
 - **Sustainability Appraisal Monitoring** – analyses the impact the LDP is having on the social, economic and environmental well-being of Rhondda Cynon Taf and;
 - **Conclusions and Recommendations** – provides an overview of the findings of the AMR and makes recommendations about issues that require further consideration.

- 1.5 The AMR has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Town & Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005; Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations (2004) and the Habitats Assessment Regulations (2004).

2 MONITORING FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 The monitoring framework comprises 3 key elements. These are the monitoring of:
- The LDP core strategy, policies and proposals;
 - The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which includes the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA); and
 - The LDP Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA).
- 2.2 The ongoing success of these documents and the policies within them are to be measured against a set of targets identified as part of the LDP process. Indicators have been formulated to determine whether these targets have been met. Where the results of these monitoring indicators conclude that the targets are not being met, and that the effectiveness of the LDP documents (or constituent parts or policies of it) are falling significantly below the level required, then consideration will be given to how the formal review of the LDP needs to proceed.

LDP Targets and Indicators

- 2.3 The LDP monitoring framework identifies 19 individual targets relating to each of the core strategy policies (inclusive of individual Strategic Sites). These targets are assessed against a set of 12 core output indicators and 19 local output indicators, specifically designed to monitor delivery of the LDP. It should be noted that whilst the targets and indicators relate to each core strategy policy, the framework has been specifically designed to ensure that linkages are made between core strategy policies, area wide policies, strategy area policies and the Plan's objectives. Monitoring the delivery of core strategy policies therefore provides a mechanism for monitoring the LDP as a whole.

The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Targets and Indicators

- 2.4 The SA of the LDP identifies a set of targets and significant effects indicators which are intended to measure the social, economic and environmental impact of the LDP. The SA identifies 22 targets and 25 indicators specifically designed to monitor the environmental credentials of the LDP.

The Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) Targets and Indicators

- 2.5 At the Deposit Plan stage it was established that the HRA should be monitored as part of the suite of SA indicators.

Replacement Targets and Indicators

- 2.6 Where the Council has been unable to monitor a target or indicator, or the indicator has been superseded, an explanation will be provided in the relevant monitoring section and an alternative indicator will be identified.
- 2.7 There may be occasions where it is necessary to amend a target or indicator. This may simply be to improve the clarity of the indicator or to re-align it with the relevant data sets. Where this is necessary an explanation will be provided in the relevant monitoring section and an alternative target or indicator will be identified.

Monitoring Progress

- 2.8 The analysis of the monitoring process will be in the form of a detailed written assessment of the indicator results and a subsequent view on the success of the targets and effectiveness of policies. This will be provided in the respective monitoring sections of this report for the LDP and SA. As a visual aid in showing these monitoring outcomes, a simple colour coded system has been devised, and will be included in the individual tables of core policy and SA results, as shown below:

	Targets are ongoing, being met or exceeded.
	Targets are not currently being achieved but the situation can be ameliorated without immediate intervention or sufficiently progressed not to require direct intervention.
	Targets are not being achieved and it is unlikely that this will be addressed without specific intervention.

- 2.9 In instances where there is nothing to report the monitoring results box will be left blank.

LDP Review

- 2.10 As mentioned above, a formal review of the LDP commenced four years after the Plan's adoption and is presently ongoing. When making a judgement on the scale of review, the monitoring framework will be fundamental to the decision

making process. It is this framework that will guide whether the Council would pursue a partial or wider revision of the plan.

2.11 Other issues that will influence the scale of review include:

- A significant change in national policy or legislation;
- A significant change in external conditions;
- A significant change in the local context e.g. closure of a significant employment site that undermines the local economy or the cumulative effect of a series of closures;
- A significant change in development pressures or needs and investment strategies of major public and private investors; and
- Significant concerns from the findings of the AMR in terms of policy effectiveness, site delivery, progress rates, and any problems with implementation.

Local Development Plan Wales (2005) and the LDP Manual (2015)

2.12 The LDP Manual provides the updated guidance concerning the Local Development Plan process. With specific regard to AMRs; paragraphs 9.4.2 – 9.4.3 of the LDP Manual state that:

“The AMR should assess the extent to which LDP strategies, policies and key sites are being delivered... The AMR is the main mechanism for reviewing the relevance and success of the LDP and identifying any changes necessary from established trends identified in the 2nd and 3rd AMR. In order to fulfil this function, the report should be highly focused rather than producing a statistical compendium” (LDP Manual, 2015, p115).

2.13 As the 2015 LDP Manual does not contain a national monitoring framework; this AMR has continued to follow the seven objectives of LDP Wales (2005) in order to ensure consistency, coherence and ease of analysis between reports.

2.14 Therefore, in addition to the monitoring framework outlined in the Council’s LDP, the Welsh Government in LDP Wales Paragraph 4.43 also has a requirement for:

“the AMR to identify any policy that is not being implemented and to give the reasons, together with any steps the authority intends to take to secure the implementation of the policy and any intention to revise the LDP to replace or amend the policy. The AMR should include an assessment of:

- *whether the basic strategy remains sound (if not, a full plan review may be needed);*
- *what impact the policies are having globally, nationally, regionally and locally;*
- *whether the policies need changing to reflect changes in national policy;*

- *whether policies and related targets in LDPs have been met or progress is being made towards meeting them, including publication of relevant supplementary planning guidance (SPG);*
- *where progress has not been made, the reasons for this and what knock on effects it may have;*
- *what aspects, if any, of the LDP need adjusting or replacing because they are not working as intended or are not achieving the objectives of the strategy and/or sustainable development objectives; and*
- *If policies or proposals need changing, what suggested actions are required to achieve this?*

The AMR must also specify the housing land supply (from the current Housing Land Availability Study) and the number of net additional affordable and general market dwellings built in the authority's area, and report on other LDP indicators.'

3 CONTEXTUAL CHANGE

- 3.1 The findings of the AMR Monitoring Framework are fundamental in determining how the implementation and delivery of the LDP is progressing. Although, it is equally important to understand how the implementation of the LDP has been influenced by local, regional, national and international social and economic factors.
- 3.2 By seeking to understand how different factors have affected the delivery of the LDP, the Council will gain a better understanding of what it can do to support the Plan's implementation. In focussing on these factors it can influence, and accepting that some factors are beyond its control, the Council will be able to better support delivery of its objectives and shape future strategies.
- 3.3 The following section looks specifically at those factors that influence development in Rhondda Cynon Taf. These include changes in:
- National policy or legislation;
 - National statistics and policy research;
 - External conditions;
 - Regional context
 - Local development context.

National Legislation, Policy and Guidance

- 3.4 The Council needs to continually consider whether changes to national planning policy, legislation and guidance have any implications for the LDP. If the implications are significant, the Council will need to determine how it addresses the issues.
- 3.5 Between 1st April 2015 and 31st March 2016, the following policy documents were issued by the Welsh Government:

Planning (Wales) Act 2015

- 3.6 The Act provides for new elements of national and regional planning policy in the form of a National Development Framework (NDF) to be compiled by Welsh Ministers and a Strategic Development Plan (SDP) to be compiled by the South East Wales Local Authorities. The NDF will replace the National Spatial Policy and will be a national policy framework for Wales, in addition to designating Developments of National Significance. The SDP is to cover the South East Wales region, and is more than likely to cover RCT (in whole or part) and will provide a blue-print and strategy for development and investment across the region. Both the NDF and SDP will have a considerable effect on future LDP

policy, which will need to be compliant with these plans. Ongoing consideration will need to be given to their progress whilst reviewing the LDP, as both the NDF and SDP are currently in their infancy. The status of LDPs in general will however be affected by both the NDF and the SDP with the LDP likely to be smaller and focused at a more local level. RCT will also need to work in conjunction with other Authorities as per the provisions within the Act and consequently this will impact upon future working arrangements.

- 3.7 The Act also makes provisions for the 'use of the Welsh language' to be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. A comprehensive collation of evidence is therefore required through the LDP review process to determine if there is a need to formulate specific planning policy on the Welsh Language in RCT.

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

- 3.8 The Act which received Royal Assent on the 29th April 2015 requires public bodies (inclusive of Local Authorities) to think more about the long term; to work more effectively with people, communities and each other; to look at problem prevention and to take a more joined-up approach. The Act also puts in place a 'sustainable development principle', which must be considered by Local Authorities in the decision-making process. It necessitates decisions to be made whilst ensuring that 'the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

- 3.9 Under the Act, Local Authorities will be required to publish a 'Well-being Statement' when preparing their well-being objectives in order to explain how said objectives will accomplish their goals, and how the sustainable development principle has been applied. Each year, an 'Annual Report' must also be produced to highlight the progress made in achieving the stated objectives. Additionally, where the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales has made recommendations to the Local Authority; they must publish their response. The Act's seven well-being goals are as follows:

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant and thriving Welsh Language
- A globally responsible Wales

- 3.10 The goals are broadly in line with the existing objectives of local planning policy and are also reflected in the *Planning for Sustainability* chapter of PPW (Chapter 4). It should be noted however that the Act provides a framework within which these objectives should be set out. It will be appropriate moving forward, to

consider how the LDP and its policies will respond to each of the 'Well-being Goals' and the Council's own 'Well-being Objectives'.

Environment (Wales) Act 2016

3.11 The Act received Royal Assent on 21st March 2016 and seeks to provide legislation to proactively and sustainably manage the natural resources of Wales. The Act includes a new biodiversity duty which aims to aid the reversal of decline and secure the long-term resilience and future of biodiversity in Wales. The Act also tasks Welsh Ministers with setting targets to reduce greenhouse emissions and the setting of carbon budgets. It further introduces new powers to increase the amount of materials for recycling, as well as improving the quality of materials to be recycled. With regard to biodiversity, RCT currently has policies largely compliant with the provisions in the Act, although their effectiveness will need to be assessed going forward. In other areas it is likely that the Act will shape future LDP policy despite the LDP containing policies that broadly support the principles and objectives of the Act.

The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016

3.12 Given Royal Assent on 21st March 2016, the Act establishes a framework for the protection of listed buildings and scheduled monuments. The Act provides additional and increased powers to prosecute where necessary; to halt any unauthorised works; to prevent buildings falling into a state of disrepair; to serve 'preservation notices' and to more easily permit Local Authorities to recover costs incurred. The Act also makes provisions for CADW and the Welsh Government to prepare policy that will guide decision-making at a local level. This will be achieved through an update to Chapter 6 of PPW in conjunction with a new TAN (24) on the historic environment.

3.13 The amendments and documents set out above are likely to require the formulation of LDP policy. It is anticipated that there will be a requirement to:

- Refer to HERs in policy making;
- Consult CADW on SA/SEA; and
- Provide specified local policy in relation to Local List designations and Historic Parks, Gardens and Landscapes, where applicable.

The Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 - 2015 No. 1598 (W197):

3.14 The amended regulations make provision for a short form LDP revisions procedure. It allows Local Planning Authorities to make amendments to policy on the proviso that these amendments must not compromise the soundness or integrity of the LDP strategy. RCT are carefully considering the regulations to ascertain which revisions process it will follow in any forthcoming review.

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 8) January 2016

- 3.15 The main changes contained in Edition 8 of PPW are:
- 3.16 **Chapter 2, Local Development Plans:** During September 2015 a revised version of Chapter 2 was published due to the refinement of the Local Development Plan process. The regulation amendments in conjunction with the related policy and guidance seek to streamline the LDP process making it more efficient and effective. Changes include the amendments to the Town and Country Planning (Local Development Plan) (Wales) Regulations 2005, guidance in the *Local Development Plan Manual* (Edition 2, 2015) and the withdrawal of *Local Development Plans Wales: Policy on Preparation of LDPs* (2005). The principal aim is to allow for swift plan preparation and revision without unnecessary prescription.
- 3.17 **Chapter 3, Making and Enforcing Planning Decisions:** References to policies of the UK Government as possible material considerations in planning decisions has been removed. The change was introduced to provide clarity for Welsh Government planning decision.
- 3.18 **Chapter 4, Planning for Sustainability:** The chapter has been updated to reflect the provisions of the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The former strengthens the consideration that must be given to the Welsh language in the planning system whilst the latter contains the seven well-being goals and the sustainable development principle. These changes demonstrate how the well-being goals link with the Welsh Government's planning policy objectives. Further the description of legislative requirements for sustainable development in the planning system has also been updated.
- 3.19 **Chapter 9, Housing:** Paragraphs within the chapter have been amended to make explicit that when LPAs assess housing requirements and plan the provision of new housing; local evidence and other key issues, like what the plan is aiming to achieve, should be considered alongside the latest Welsh Government projections. Guidance is also provided on assessing the various elements of the projections and consider if they're appropriate for the area.
- 3.20 **Chapter 14, Minerals:** Chapter 14 incorporates the Welsh Government's planning policies for minerals development that were previously included within *Minerals Planning Policy Wales* (2001). The integration exercise did not result in changes to existing policy and *Minerals Planning Policy Wales* has subsequently been cancelled.

TAN 4: Retail Centre Development (Proposed)

- 3.21 In September 2015 the Welsh Government consulted on its proposed changes to TAN 4: Retail Centre Development. The principal changes include revised objectives for retail planning policy including the need for flexibility in responding to market changes; the need for LDP retail policy to be framed by an LDP retail strategy; a requirement for LDPs to set out a locally derived hierarchy of retail centres; clearer guidance on uses subject to a sequential test and revised policies for dealing with new uses and centres undergoing change.
- 3.22 As the proposed changes are yet to be formally incorporated in an updated version of TAN 4 there is no need for action at present. RCT will however need to bear the new requirements in mind moving forward. The requirements of the TAN in conjunction with Chapter 10 of PPW will likely shape future LDP policy, as well as requiring additional evidence-base documents.

TAN 12: Design

- 3.23 The TAN seeks to supply those involved in the design of development process with guidance on how 'promoting sustainability through good design' and 'planning for sustainable buildings' might be facilitated via the planning system. It includes advice and information on a number of related areas such as the definition of development for planning purposes; design considerations; local planning authority design policy and advice; the process for preparing design and access statements and information on how to achieve sustainable buildings.
- 3.24 The LDP contains design policy that is predominantly compliant with the requirements of the TAN however there may be a need to move away from the more prescriptive standards of design and adopt a more holistic approach as per the guidance. The Council will also need to ensure effective stakeholder involvement in developing design guidance/policies and provide information on design issues.

Local Development Plan Manual (Edition 2) – August 2015

- 3.25 Published in August 2015, the Local Development Plan Manual (Ed.2) is a practitioner's document containing practical and technical advice on how to revise or prepare an LDP. The changes to this version of the document include: increased front-loading of the LDP process resulting in more information being included within the Preferred Strategy; the removal of the Alternative Sites stage from the process and a fully integrated Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment into the process. The new guidance further explains the short form LDP revisions procedure that permits Local Authorities to make minor changes to the plan as opposed to completing a full revision, providing the strategy remains sound. The guidance will help to shape and inform the type of revision proposed and the subsequent processes of revision. This will need to be considered alongside the NDF/SDP, as these plans are likely to shape significantly the future direction and content of the LDP.

National Statistics and Policy Research

3.26 The 2015-2016 monitoring year saw the publication of the following statistical and research documents:

Exploring Methods for the Identification of Strategic Planning Areas, October 2015

3.27 The report, compiled by Cardiff University, identifies and assesses a number of options which could be utilised in order to identify strategic planning areas (SPAs) that can come forward as a result of the Planning (Wales) Act 2015. The report highlights the importance and significance of boundaries in designating a SPA. When formulating such areas, regard must be given to the political, social and technical criteria to ensure durability. The report cautions that boundaries have 'power, symbolism and shape development patterns for long periods'; it also states that whilst SPAs may reflect embedded geographies, this is also an opportunity to re-frame the geography of strategic planning in Wales around identified long-term objectives. It warns however that any decisions taken must ensure the robustness of existing working practices and that any gains must outweigh costs.

Welsh Language Use Survey

3.28 The Welsh Government released their Welsh Language survey data on the 26th November 2015, which comprised data from 2013 to 2015. The survey provides information about Welsh speakers' use of the Welsh language. It was found that the number and percentage of fluent Welsh speakers is broadly similar to the levels of the 2004-2006 survey. The survey also shows that the highest concentrations of Welsh speakers are found in the West Wales Local Authority areas. Additionally, the largest increases in the number of fluent Welsh speakers occurred in Cardiff and Rhondda Cynon Taf, with the latter increasing its Welsh speaking population by 5,300 individuals. This could have implications for the LDP in terms of the need to formulate locally specific policy concerning the Welsh language in line with the provisions of the Planning (Wales) Act 2015. This matter will need to be explored further.

External Conditions

UK

3.29 **Economy:** ONS data indicates that the economy is continuing to improve, albeit slowly and steadily. The latest ONS data shows that Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is estimated to have increased by 0.7% in quarter 2 (April to June) 2015 in comparison with a 0.4% increase from the previous quarter. The estimate increase from quarter 1 (January to March) 2016 was 0.4% compared with

growth of 0.6% in quarter 4 (October to December) 2015. In terms of output, only one industry increased in quarter 1 (January to March) 2016, this being the service industry which had an output increase of 0.6%. The other three main industrial groupings within the economy decreased, with production falling 0.4%, construction output by 0.9% and agriculture by 0.1%. For comparison purposes, it should be noted that GDP was 2.1% higher in quarter 1 (January to March) 2016 compared with the same quarter a year ago, highlighting that the economy continues to grow.

3.30 Housing: The latest housing data indicates that the housing sector has seen reasonably strong and steady growth in the year to March 2016. ONS figures show that UK house prices increased by 9.0% in the year to March 2016, up from 7.6% in the year to February 2016. This is an improvement on the performance of the preceding year, however when London and the South East are removed the figure slides to 5.9%. House price growth has remained high and the ONS attribute this to a strong demand for housing with weak supply UK-wide. The average UK house price as of March 2016 was £292,000, whilst the price paid by first-time buyers was 9.7% higher on average than in March 2015. For owner-occupiers (existing owners), prices increased by 8.7% for the same period.

3.31 Employment: Between the three months to January 2016 and February to April 2016, the number of people in work increased, the number of unemployed people fell and the number of people not working and not seeking or available to work (economically inactive) fell slightly. Between April to June 2016 there were 31.59 million people in work, 55,000 more than the three months to January 2016 and 461,000 more than for a year earlier. The employment rate was 74.2%, the joint highest since comparable records began in 1971, whilst the unemployment rate was 5.0%, the lowest since August to October 2005. UK-wide there are 23.10 million people in full-time work, 304,000 more than for the previous year and 8.50 million people working part-time, 157,000 more than the preceding year. There are 1.67 million unemployed people (people not in work but seeking and available to work), 20,000 fewer than for the three months to January 2016 and 148,000 fewer than the year prior; this is the lowest figure since March to May 2008. Further there are 8.92 million people aged from 16-64 who are economically inactive, 9,000 fewer than for the 3 months to January 2016 and 124,000 fewer than a year earlier. The inactivity rate (the proportion of people aged from 16-64 who are economically inactive) is 21.8%, unchanged compared with the three months to January 2016 but lower than for a year prior (22.2%). The data highlights how the economy has continued to improve, albeit slowly and steadily.

Wales

3.32 Housing: During 2015-2016 a total of 6,708 new dwellings were started in Wales. This is 247 houses fewer than were started in the year 2014-2015 (6,955), representing a fairly minor 3.55% decrease compared with last year. That being said, this is the second highest figure since the economic downturn and housing figures of 2008-2009. Welsh Government statistics on dwelling

completions for 2015-2016 show that 6,789 dwellings were completed during this period. This represents a 10.0% increase from the previous year (6,170) and shows that although Wales has not yet reached pre-recession highs, there are positive increments year on year illustrating economic recovery. The majority of new dwellings completed were 3 bedroom properties accounting for 2,683 of total completions; 4+ bedrooms totalled 1,823; 2 bedrooms totalled 1,552 and 1 bedroom 731.

- 3.33 **Employment:** Key economic statistics for Wales published in April 2016 by the Welsh Government show that the employment rate in Wales, as estimated by the Labour Force Survey, was 72.0% of those aged 16-64 during December 2015 to February 2016, up from 69.8% a year earlier. The UK rate for the same period was 74.4%, up from 73.4% a year prior.
- 3.34 In terms of the unemployment rate in Wales, it was 5.0% of the economically active population during December 2015 to February 2016, down 6.2% a year earlier. The UK rate for the same period was 5.1% down from 5.6% a year earlier. This shows how Wales is coming into line with the general trend witnessed throughout the UK as a whole.
- 3.35 Additionally, there were 373,900 people employed in the public sector in Wales to the year ending 31st March 2016. This is 6,800 individuals less than the figure for the year ending 31st March 2015 (380,700). The statistics clearly reflect the budget cuts witnessed within this sector over the year. It is interesting to note however that public sector employment UK-wide increased from 6,886,900 for the year ending 31st March 2015 to 6,902,400 for the year ending 31st March 2016, an increase of 15,500 individuals. This might suggest that Wales has been the worst affected Country in the UK in terms of budget cuts.

The Regional Context

City Deal

- 3.36 The Cardiff Capital Region has secured a deal worth £1.2 billion, known as the City Deal. Signed on the 15th March 2016 by the 10 South East Wales Local Authorities; it is expected to deliver significant regeneration, jobs and investment to South East Wales in the coming years. For RCT in particular the City Deal is likely to result in substantial transportation improvements, such as the electrification of the rail lines as part of the South East Wales Metro. This will improve accessibility particularly in the Northern Strategy Area, which will provide residents access to employment and other social opportunities within the Cardiff Capital Region. Additionally, the City Deal will provide investment to the area to unlock housing and employment sites, as well as supporting innovation, improving the digital network and tackling unemployment.

National Development Framework:

3.37 The Planning (Wales) Act 2015 provides a statutory requirement for the Welsh Ministers to produce and keep an up-to-date National Development Framework (NDF) to replace the Wales Spatial Plan. The NDF will have a number of roles and functions including setting out 'the Welsh Government's land-use priorities and providing a national land-use framework for strategic and local development plans'. The NDF will focus on land-use issues and developments of national significance that the planning system can influence and deliver. This Framework will have many implications for future policy formulation, as the LDP will need to be compliant with its content. Until the plan is in place however there is little action to be taken in this regard.

Strategic Development Plan:

3.38 As with the NDF, the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 provides a legal framework for the preparation of a Strategic Development Plan (SDP). Welsh Government suggest there is evidence to show that there are many strategic planning issues that first generation LDPs have failed to address in isolation. Consequently, those 'larger than local issues' such as housing, employment and transport infrastructure can be tackled at a strategic level to ensure they are being considered and planned for in a comprehensive way. It is stated that universal coverage of a SDP across Wales is unnecessary and as such, the plans are likely to be formulated around the largest urban areas like Cardiff and Swansea. This approach allows for greater flexibility in achieving long-term objectives. RCT will need to work in conjunction with other South East Wales Authorities in order to formulate a plan for the Cardiff Capital Region; this area could include RCT in whole or in part.

Other Local Authorities LDPs

3.39 **Cardiff:** Cardiff's Local Development Plan was adopted on the 28th January 2016. There are three green-field Strategic Sites within the Cardiff LDP that could potentially impact significantly upon RCT although the effects were discussed in policy terms during the 'matters arising changes'. The policies' success will however be contingent upon the cooperation and agreement of both Authorities particularly at the planning applications stage. The policy changes state that provisions for new homes and local employment opportunities in these areas will be delivered using a phased approach, and will include the bus-based rapid transit corridors through the sites; off-site infrastructure; extensions of the bus network with increased frequency and reliability; a strategic park and ride facility north of Junction 33 of the M4; and improved linkages with Rhondda Cynon Taf.

3.40 **Vale of Glamorgan:** The Vale of Glamorgan submitted their LDP to the Welsh Government for inspection on the 24th July 2015. The hearing sessions (1-22) ran between the 19th January 2016 and the 19th April 2016. Hearing session 23: *Monitoring and Implementation* was however postponed. A new date will be

arranged in due course following the ongoing action points arising from the hearing sessions and the Council's submission of revised monitoring framework.

- 3.41 **Caerphilly:** On the 19th July 2016, Caerphilly County Borough Council resolved to withdraw the Replacement Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan (LDP) to 2031. In accordance with Regulation 26 of the Town and Country Planning Local Development Plan (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended); the Council will meet with the Cabinet Secretary for the Environment and Rural Affairs in order to discuss their intention to formally withdraw the Replacement LDP. It is considered appropriate that RCT will discuss with Caerphilly the possibility of a joint revisions procedure going forward as one of a number of options.
- 3.42 **Neath Port Talbot:** Following the examination hearings in mid 2015, the Council resolved to adopt the LDP on the 27th January 2016. Consultation on a series of SPG took place through to 7th September 2016. The allocations within the Neath-Port Talbot LDP will have a minimal effect on RCT.
- 3.43 **Merthyr Tydfil:** Merthyr Tydfil commenced their LDP revisions process on the 25th May 2015; the process has culminated with the production of their Review Report which was submitted to the Welsh Government in April 2016. The report sets out the changes required to the LDP and the revision procedure to be followed. The conclusions of the report state that the strategy which underpins the plan is not being delivered at present and a full replacement plan is most appropriate. Work is progressing with regards to this. RCT and Merthyr held discussions concerning the possibility of a joint LDP revisions process however it was concluded that this proposal would not be appropriate.

The Local Development Context

- 3.44 In order to properly understand the local context for the LDP, it is necessary to consider a range of factors which affect implementation. These factors include changes to the local policy framework, local economic conditions (in particular the operations of the housing and commercial markets) and the investment strategies of major public and private sector organisations.

Local Policy Framework

- 3.45 There have been no additions to the policy framework in 2015-2016 however the following document has been added to the LDP evidence base.

Rhondda Cynon Taf Joint Housing Land Availability Study 2016, published July 2016.

- 3.46 The Joint Housing Land Availability Studies (JHLAS) provide detailed information on the housing land supply in Rhondda Cynon Taf. The findings of the study indicate that instead of having the required 5 year housing land supply, there was

a 2.4 year supply on the 1st April 2015 and a 1.5 year supply on the 1st April 2016. The supply has fallen 1.3 years since the 2014 study. The Council has outlined a number of actions intended to ameliorate the situation in the JHLA Study Report. The shortfall is recognised as an important factor to be taken into account during any LDP revisions process.

Local Economic Conditions

- 3.47 The two sectors of the local economy that are particularly relevant to the successful implementation of the LDP are the housing market and the commercial property market.
- 3.48 The Joint Housing Land Availability Study (JHLAS) (2016) indicates that the Council, based on the residual method, has a 1.5 year housing land supply on the 1st April 2016. The JHLAS (2015) indicated that we had a 2.4 year housing land supply on the 1st April 2015; this is a reduction of 1.3 years since the 2014 study. Nevertheless the total number of housing completions in RCT for 2015-2016 is 569 which is an improvement from the previous year high of 553 with 98 being affordable dwellings.
- 3.49 During 2015-2016, 15,748 square metres, of major retail, office and leisure development was permitted, with a total of 10,024 sqm permitted in town centre locations in Rhondda Cynon Taf. In addition to commercial activities, during 2015-2016 there has also been activity with a number of schemes permitted for energy generation throughout Rhondda Cynon Taf. During 2015-2016, a total of 33.8 MW was approved across a number of schemes. Eleven wind turbines at Treorchy (3), Ynysybwl (2) and Llanharan (6) received consent which will generate a combined total of 24.5MW; two solar farms were also given consent at Pontypridd and Llanharry which will generate a total of 9 MW and one small scale micro-hydro scheme was given consent at Treherbert which will generate 0.3MW.
- 3.50 The impact of the global economic recession on the economy of Rhondda Cynon Taf continues to be a matter of concern for the Council, even though the economy is showing signs of steady improvement. Despite evidence that both the housing and commercial markets in the County Borough are experiencing encouraging growth; a prolonged reduction in new investment in the housing and commercial markets will inevitably have an adverse impact on the delivery of some elements of the LDP. The June 2016 decision to exit the European Union also has the potential to reverse this growth trend however the scale of these consequences are currently unknown.

Public and Private Sector Funding and Investment

Vibrant & Viable Places Programme

3.51 Rhondda Cynon Taf received grant approval of £6.480 million from Welsh Government's Vibrant and Viable Places Regeneration Framework towards a programme of regeneration activity in the settlement area of Pontypridd.

3.52 The programme consists of the following initiatives:-

- **Creating Homes above Retail Premises** is renovating vacant space above retail premises in Pontypridd Town Centre. Homestep Plus is purchasing and renovating properties targeted at first time buyers through a low cost home ownership/shared equity scheme.
- **Heat & Save Ponty** is providing energy efficiency measures in over 400 homes.
- **Regenerating Lady Windsor Colliery Site** is preparing baseline information to support the future development of the site for new housing.
- **Pontypridd Hub** is developing a major redesign of the YMCA building to create a multipurpose facility creating new and improved facilities including workspace for social enterprise and business, a fitness suite, a café and a suite of dedicated arts facilities.
- **Pontypridd Townscape Enhancement Programme+** is renovating and improving commercial buildings in the town centre.
- **Regeneration of Taff Vale Site** is unlocking the potential of the site and presents a major opportunity for a mixed use development at the heart of Pontypridd town centre.

OTHER PROJECTS

- **Pontypridd Lido Restoration** has transformed and brought back into use the derelict; disused Grade 2 listed Lido in Ynysangharad Park, Pontypridd as a high quality regional visitor attraction.
- **Town Centre Partnership** funding is bringing traders and stakeholders together in Aberdare and Porth Town Centres to develop a partnership approach to improving the commercial environment.
- **Business Improvement District** – Businesses in Pontypridd have voted to establish a BID for the town and are now establishing an action plan to explore ways to improve the local trading environment.

3.53 This chapter has identified a number of key contextual changes in national and local planning policy, legislation and guidance, as well as setting the broader social and economic contexts that would have some effect on the delivery of the

LDP. There are various issues identified that will need to be considered further during the revisions procedure.

4 LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN MONITORING

- 4.1 The 2016 AMR is the fifth monitoring report to be prepared since the adoption of the Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP and provides an important opportunity for the Council to assess the impact the LDP is having on the social, economic and environmental well-being of the County Borough. Although 5 years may not give us a long-term picture of the success of the development plan process in Rhondda Cynon Taf, this fifth AMR allows for the identification of emerging patterns of development and associated issues.
- 4.2 This section of the report will firstly set out the Core and Local Output Indicators along with their Monitoring Results for 2015-2016. It will then analyse these results in relation to the Core Policies, and in doing so, assess the performance of these policies in delivering the identified targets of the Plan.

Core Output Indicators		Monitoring Results
CI 1	The housing land supply taken from the current Housing Land Availability Study per annum.	The Joint Housing Land Availability Study (JHLAS) (2016) indicated that Rhondda Cynon Taf had housing land on the 1/04/16 to last 1.5 years, compared to the requirement for a 5 year supply. The JHLAS (2015) indicated that RCT had a 2.4 year housing land supply on the 1/04/15.
CI 2	Number of net additional affordable and general market dwellings built in the Plan area per annum.	<p>Total housing completions (affordable and market)</p> <p>2015/16 - 569 2014/15 - 553 2013/14 - 534 2012/13 - 414 2011/12 - 357 2010/11 - 462 dwellings</p> <p>Affordable housing completions (excluding market)</p> <p>2015/16 - 98</p> <p>2014/15 - 114 (there were a further 4 affordable units through renovating existing dwellings)</p> <p>2013/14 - 75 (there were a further 7 affordable units created through renovating existing dwellings and another 9 units provided within a new-build hostel). 2012/13 - 77 2011/12 - 39 2010/11 – 7 8 dwellings</p>

		<p>Market housing completions (excluding affordable)</p> <p>2015/16 - 471 2014/15 - 439 2013/14 - 459 2012/13 - 337 2011/12 - 318 2010/11 - 384 dwellings</p>																																				
CI 3	Net employment land supply/development per annum.	The allocated LDP employment land supply is 98 hectares. During 2015-2016, 4.17 hectares of this was developed at NSA 14.2 – North of 5 th Avenue, Hirwaun.																																				
CI 4	Amount of development, including housing, permitted on allocated sites in the development plan as a % of development plan allocations and as % of total development permitted (ha and units).	<p>All developments permitted on all allocated sites 2015-2016 (of a total of 841 hectares);</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Size (ha)</th> <th>% of Allocated Land</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Up to 2011</td> <td>36.93ha</td> <td>4.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011 - 2012</td> <td>10.98ha</td> <td>1.3%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012 - 2013</td> <td>5.37ha</td> <td>0.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013 - 2014</td> <td>28.46ha</td> <td>3.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014 - 2015</td> <td>109.5ha</td> <td>13%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2015 - 2016</td> <td>76.12ha</td> <td>9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Totals to date</td> <td>267.35ha</td> <td>31.8%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>All residential development permitted on residential allocation sites 2015-2016 (total of 386 hectares of residential allocations and approximately 9,200 units);</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Size (ha)/Units</th> <th>% Allocated Land/ % Allocated Units</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Up to 2011</td> <td>30.76 / 589</td> <td>7.96% / 6.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011 - 2012</td> <td>10.98 / 244</td> <td>2.84% / 2.65%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012 - 2013</td> <td>5.37 / 151</td> <td>1.39% / 1.64%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Size (ha)	% of Allocated Land	Up to 2011	36.93ha	4.4%	2011 - 2012	10.98ha	1.3%	2012 - 2013	5.37ha	0.6%	2013 - 2014	28.46ha	3.4%	2014 - 2015	109.5ha	13%	2015 - 2016	76.12ha	9%	Totals to date	267.35ha	31.8%		Size (ha)/Units	% Allocated Land/ % Allocated Units	Up to 2011	30.76 / 589	7.96% / 6.4%	2011 - 2012	10.98 / 244	2.84% / 2.65%	2012 - 2013	5.37 / 151	1.39% / 1.64%
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CI 5	Average density of housing development permitted on allocated development plan sites.	The average density of housing development permitted on allocated sites is 37 dph.												
CI 6	Amount of new development (ha) permitted on previously developed land expressed as a % of all development permitted per annum.	<p>During 2015-2016, 14.4%, or 32 hectares of a total of 222 hectares of development permitted, was on previously developed land or within existing buildings.</p> <p>For information, 189 hectares of development was permitted on greenfield land over the year, however, 101 hectares of this was for an opencast scheme with an agreed restoration scheme to return it back to its natural condition, whilst another development for 50 hectares was on a former opencast site that has not been fully restored. Another 30 hectares permitted was for renewable energy schemes for solar farms or wind turbines.</p>												
CI 7	Amount of major retail, office and leisure development (sq m) permitted in town centres expressed as a % of all major retail, office and leisure development permitted. (Amended indicator as agreed).	During 2015-2016, 10,024 sqm's of major retail, office and leisure development of a total of 15,748 sqm's of such development, was permitted in the identified town centres, or within new local centres in their respective Strategic Sites in Rhondda Cynon Taf. This equates to 63.7% of the total.												

CI 8	Amount of development (by TAN 15 paragraph 5.1 development category) permitted in C1 and C2 floodplain areas not meeting all Tan 15 tests (paragraph 6.2i-v).	During 2015-2016, no highly vulnerable development was permitted in C2 flood-risk zones that did not meet all TAN 15 tests.
CI 9	Amount of greenfield and open space lost to development (ha) which is not allocated in the development plan	<p>During 2015-2016, planning permission was granted for the development of 139 hectares of greenfield land which is not allocated in the LDP.</p> <p>As mentioned above, of these, 101 hectares were for an opencast scheme with an agreed restoration scheme to return it back to its natural condition. Another 30 hectares permitted was for renewable energy schemes for solar farms or wind turbines.</p>
CI 10	Amount of waste management capacity permitted expressed as a percentage of the total capacity required, as identified in the Regional Waste Plan (TAN 21) per annum.	During 2015-2016, a further 0.21 hectares of waste management capacity was permitted.
CI 11	The extent of primary land-won aggregates permitted in accordance with the Regional Technical Statement for Aggregates expressed as a % of the total capacity required as identified in the Regional Technical Statement (MTAN).	No primary land-won aggregates were permitted for extraction in 2015-2016.
CI 12	The capacity of Renewable Energy developments (MW) installed inside Strategic Search Areas by type per annum.	During 2015-2016, a further wind turbine was installed at Bwllfa Farm, Ton Pentre, which is within the Strategic Search Area F (SSAF). This development has a generating capacity of 0.5 MW . Although, during the early month of 2016, (up until the end of the AMR period in March), construction had progressed on approximately 16 of the 30 wind turbines approved in

		<p>Rhondda Cynon Taf as part of the wider 'Pen Y Cymoedd' wind farm scheme.</p> <p>Solar energy schemes with the capacity to generate 20.81 MW were installed during 2015-2016.</p> <p>An anaerobic digestion facility also became operational in 2015-2016, with an energy production capacity of 1 MW and 24,000 tons of fertiliser.</p> <p>During 2015-2016, planning permission was granted for 24.5 MW of renewable energy capacity in the form of wind turbines, all within, or within 5 kilometres of SSAF.</p> <p>A further 9 MW of solar energy was approved within large solar farms, whilst a small scale hydro energy project was permitted, which would produce a further 0.3 MW of energy.</p>
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Local Output Indicators		Monitoring Results
LI 1	Number of dwellings permitted annually outside the defined settlement boundaries.	86 dwellings were permitted outside the defined settlement boundaries during 2015-2016. 77 of these were related to one application that had unique material circumstances and reasons for approval. A further approval was made in accordance with policy NSA 12 and 4 others were replacements of sub-standard properties.
LI 2	Number of affordable dwellings provided annually on rural exception sites throughout Rhondda Cynon Taf.	No affordable dwellings were permitted on rural exception sites in Rhondda Cynon Taf during 2015-2016.
LI 3	Average house price in Rhondda Cynon Taf per annum.	The average actual house sales price in the County Borough during 2015/16 was £118,659.03, this has increased from the 2014/15 monitoring year which saw an average price of £112,905, and up from £109,470 in 2013/14. (Source– Land Registry).
LI 4	Amount of affordable housing provided by Social Housing Grant per	44 affordable houses were funded by Social Housing Grant during 2015-2016

	annum.	
LI 5	% of employment land lost to alternative uses per annum	No employment land was lost to alternative uses during 2015-2016.
LI 6	Total convenience/retail floorspace developed per annum.	1,700 square metres of gross retail floor-space was developed during 2015-2016 at the Former Millfield depot in Pontypridd.
LI 7	Annual vacancy rates for each Principal Town and Key Settlement.	<p>The Town Centre Retail Survey of early 2016 indicated annual vacancy rates for each of the Principal Towns and Key Settlements during 2015-2016 as follows:</p> <p>Aberdare 9.0%</p> <p>Pontypridd 8.7%</p> <p>Llantrisant / Talbot Green 2.6%</p> <p>Ferndale 13%</p> <p>Hirwaun 22%</p> <p>Llanharan 0%</p> <p>Mountain Ash 12.7%</p> <p>Porth 10.8%</p> <p>Tonypandy 20.5%</p> <p>Tonyrefail 12.9%</p> <p>Treorchy 9%</p> <p>The overall vacancy rate for these centres combined during 2015-2016 was 10.6%; for 2014-2015 was 10.8% and for 2013-2014 was 11.4%</p>
LI 8	Number of applications approved per annum for non-retail use in primary and secondary shopping frontages.	No applications were approved during 2015-2016 for non-retail uses in primary shopping frontages.
LI 9	Number of highway, roads, public transport and walking and cycling schemes implemented per annum.	The cycle route at SSA 21.2 - Extension to Connect 2 scheme Pontypridd was completed
LI 10	Proportion of new housing, employment	All bar one, or 99.95 %, of the 2,187 new houses permitted during 2015-2016 are accessible and within

	and retail development accessible by a range of transport modes per annum.	<p>400 metres of at least one or more transport mode.</p> <p>92.3% (12 of 13), of all new employment permitted is accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport mode. The 13th unit is a farm diversification scheme.</p> <p>All 23 new retail permissions during 2015-2016 are accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport modes.</p>
LI 11	The number of SINC affected by development and the number of mitigation schemes secured annually (amended indicator as agreed).	<p>6 SINC have been affected by proposed development permitted during 2015-2016. Three of the major developments are subject to mitigation measures including the offsetting of 130 hectares of land for management. Three other minor developments have affected less than 900 square metres of SINC, considered to be acceptable without mitigation measures required.</p>
LI 12	Annual recycling / reuse/composting rates.	<p>The recycling/reuse/composting rates for 2015-2016 were as follows;</p> <p>Recycled – 46.9% (LWMT010ii) Reused – 0.56% (LWMT010i) Composted – 13.64% (LWMT010iii) Energy Recovery – 25.95% (LWMT012) Land-filled – 22.59% (WMT004b)</p>
LI 13	Amount of mineral deposits sterilised by new development annually.	<p>The amount of mineral deposits potentially sterilised by new development during 2015-2016 was as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandstone 2.26 hectares • Sand and Gravel 0 hectares • Limestone 0 hectares • Coal 0 hectares <p>In accordance with Mineral Planning Policy Wales, it was determined that only permanent developments outside the settlement boundary that were also classed as sensitive development could be considered to be sterilising the resource. Furthermore, any part of the minerals safeguarding areas which were already effectively sterilised on account of existing property (having the above characteristics), would not be taken into consideration when calculating the scale of the deposit affected.</p>

LI 14	Pre-application discussions and masterplanning exercises undertaken with developers in relation to the development of Strategic Sites.	Pre-application discussions and/or master-planning exercises have taken place in respect of the Strategic Sites at Robertstown/Abernant, Land South of Hirwaun and the Mwyndy Strategic Site residential element during 2015-2016.
LI 15	Planning permission granted for Strategic Sites.	<p>During 2015-2016, it has been determined that the previous resolution to approve an application (hybrid application of part full and part outline) for a mixed use development at Llanilid would be subject to CIL. Accordingly planning permission is granted for the development, with new housing of up to 1850 dwellings, a new village/district centre (comprising a new primary school, medical/health centre, community uses, up to 2,000m² food-store, shops, small offices and a pub/café).</p> <p>In May 2015, permission was also granted for a supermarket on the Hirwaun Strategic Site and for a supermarket on the Robertstown Strategic Site.</p>
LI 16	Annual rate of residential and/or commercial development on Strategic Sites.	Prior to April 2012, 47 dwellings had been built on the Strategic Site at Llanilid. A further 24 dwellings were built during 2015-2016 on a site for 104 units, whilst 64 dwellings were built during 2012-2013 and 25 during 2013-2014.
LI 17	Annual provision of local centres, primary schools, open space and biodiversity management schemes on Strategic Sites.	Biodiversity mitigation has been implemented and is ongoing in association with the opencast operation on the Hirwaun Strategic Site. The town centre and specifically the supermarket application on the Mwyndy Strategic Site also include proposals for the mitigation of the Pant Marsh area.
LI 18	Annual provision of highway and utility infrastructure on Strategic Sites.	The access point for the new Mwyndy/Talbot Green town centre has been implemented with infrastructure development continuing.
LI 19	Implementation of Regeneration Strategies during 2010-2021.	In 2015-2016, further elements of the Aberdare and Pontypridd Regeneration Strategies were implemented.

Core Policy Monitoring Analysis

POLICY:	OBJECTIVE:	RELATED POLICIES:																												
CS 1 - Development in the North	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 8	NSA 1 to NSA 28																												
MONITORING TARGET:	MONITORING TARGET:																													
To build strong and sustainable communities in the Northern Strategy Area over the Plan period	ADOPTION: None																													
	2015: 40% of allocations																													
	2021: 100% of allocations																													
PERFORMANCE:																														
CORE AND LOCAL OUTPUT INDICATORS:																														
CI 2, CI 4, CI 5, CI 6, CI 8, CI 9, CI 12, LI 9, LI 11 and LI 19																														
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:																														
<p>A key element of the Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP core strategy is to build strong and sustainable communities in the Northern Strategy Area (NSA). In order to build strong and sustainable communities it will be necessary to halt the process of depopulation and decline and deliver beneficial, sustainable development in northern Rhondda Cynon Taf. To fully understand the progress made in achieving this target it is necessary to consider the findings of the monitoring exercise, as identified in the above indicators, in relation to the following interrelated factors:</p> <p>Housing</p> <p>Below are the house building completion figures in the NSA for 2015-2016, showing previous years completions for comparative purposes (CI 2);</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>General Market</th> <th>Affordable</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2015-2016</td> <td>127</td> <td>48</td> <td>175</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014-2015</td> <td>157</td> <td>20</td> <td>177</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013-2014</td> <td>153</td> <td>23</td> <td>176</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012-2013</td> <td>94</td> <td>52</td> <td>146</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011-2012</td> <td>130</td> <td>26</td> <td>156</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010-2011</td> <td>160</td> <td>21</td> <td>181</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Taking these and previous completions into consideration, an overall total of 1,775 new</p>				General Market	Affordable	Total	2015-2016	127	48	175	2014-2015	157	20	177	2013-2014	153	23	176	2012-2013	94	52	146	2011-2012	130	26	156	2010-2011	160	21	181
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2013-2014	153	23	176																											
2012-2013	94	52	146																											
2011-2012	130	26	156																											
2010-2011	160	21	181																											

dwellings have been built in the NSA since the start of the plan period in 2006.

During 2015-2016, the Council **approved 201 houses** in the Northern Strategy Area. Since the adoption of the plan in 2011, **1,719** houses have been given planning permission in the NSA.

To date, planning permission has been granted and development taken place on the following allocated sites: (CI 4)

- NSA 9.4 - Site including the Old Brickworks, Old Dairy and tipped land rear of Birchwood, Llwydcoed;
- NSA 9.11 - Gwernifor Grounds, Mountain Ash.

To date, planning permission has been granted on the following allocated sites:

- NSA 9.10 – Land to the end of Godreaman Street, Godreaman (Outline);
- NSA 9.18 – Llwynypia Hospital (Outline).

The Council has resolved to approve planning applications for development on the following allocated sites where the signing of a S106 Agreement is awaited:

- NSA 9.9 – Ynyscynon Farm, Cwmbach (Outline), currently at appeal;
- NSA 9.15 - Old Hospital Site and School Playground, Treherbert;
- NSA 9.20 – Land at Dinas road/Graig Ddu Road, Dinas.

Appendix 1 – Status of Allocations provides an update in respect to each individual allocation.

Strategic Sites

Details of progress of the Strategic Sites are shown in their respective tables of analysis for policies CS 3.1 to CS 3.8.

Sustainable Development

During 2015-2016, 14.4%, or 32 hectares of a total of 222 hectares of development permitted throughout the County Borough, was on previously developed land or within existing buildings (CI 6).

For information, 189 hectares of development was permitted on greenfield land over the year. However, 101 hectares of this was for an opencast scheme with an agreed restoration scheme to return it back to its natural condition, whilst another development for 50 hectares on the allocated Llanilid Strategic Site was on a former opencast site that has not been fully restored. Another 30 hectares permitted on this greenfield land was for renewable energy schemes for solar farms or wind turbines.

Of all the developments permitted on land within the NSA in 2015-2016, (totalling 125 hectares), 12.9 hectares or 10.3% were on previously developed land. A further 5.2 hectares or 4.16% of permissions were on or within existing premises. 106.9 hectares or 85.5% of the permissions were on greenfield land, although 103.2 hectares or 96.5% of these permitted greenfield developments were for the larger opencast scheme and some renewable wind energy schemes mentioned above (CI 9).

During 2015-2016, no highly vulnerable development was permitted in C2 flood-risk zones that did not meet all TAN 15 tests (CI 8).

During 2015-2016, a further wind turbine was installed at Bwllfa Farm, Ton Pentre, which is within the Strategic Search Area F (SSAF). This development has a generating capacity of 0.5 MW, however, during the early months of 2016, (up until the end of the AMR period in March), construction had progressed on approximately 16 of the 30 wind turbines approved in Rhondda Cynon Taf as part of the wider 'Pen Y Cymoedd' wind farm scheme.

Solar energy schemes with the capacity to generate **11.6 MW** were installed during 2015-2016 in the SSA.

An anaerobic digestion facility also became operational in 2015-2016, with an energy production capacity of **1 MW** and 24,000 tons of fertiliser.

A further 5 wind turbines in two schemes were permitted in the NSA with a capacity of **9.5 MW** of energy, with a small hydro scheme also approved with a 0.3 MW capacity (CI 12).

3 SINC have been affected by developments permitted in the NSA during 2015-2016. A major development has an agreed mitigation scheme, whilst two minor developments are affecting just 200 square metres of SINC (LI 11).

Economic Activity

During 2015-2016 development commenced at NSA 14.2. NSA 14.1 received outline planning permission for a mixed-use scheme on the 16th May 2016 at the former Chubb Factory, Ferndale (although this is outside the current monitoring period).

The 4.17ha allocation at Hirwaun Industrial Estate (NSA 14.2) has begun to implement its consent for a sustainable waste resource recovery and energy production plant at Fifth and Ninth Avenues. This scheme includes a combined heat and power plant with capacity of 20 MW. Two buildings have been erected to date and works are ongoing.

The development of a considerable college campus has begun on the employment site at Robertstown.

Further information is given regarding these issues in the relevant analysis of results for CS 6 and CS 7 below. Further information on any proposals for such allocations is also detailed in Appendix 1 – Status of Allocations.

Sustainable Transportation / Accessibility

Listed below are those allocated transportation scheme completed to date (LI 9):

- NSA 21.3 - Expansion of existing park and ride facilities, Robertstown;
- NSA 23.3 - The Heads of the Valley Cycleway & links to Hirwaun Industrial Estate;
- NSA 21.2 – Land south of Ty Trevithick, adjacent to A470 Abercynon.

In addition to the above, progress has been made with other allocated schemes. The Mountain Ash Northern Cross Valley Link has been reviewed as part of the ongoing development proposals of the Southern Cross Valley Link. The park and ride provision for the Hirwaun Strategic Site has been included as part of the Cynon Gateway scheme within the SE Wales Valleys LTP. Funding bids have been submitted in relation to the Cynon Valley cycle route NSA 23.2.

Funding has also been allocated to enable feasibility/design work focussing on access to schools and stations in relation to the Rhondda Community Route Network. Further detail in relation to the transportation allocations may be seen in Appendix 1 – Status of Allocations.

During 2015-2016, the LDP and Development Management process has been successful in guiding development to sustainable locations. 99.95% of all new houses permitted during 2015-2016 are accessible and within 400 metres of at least one or more transport mode.

92.3% (12 of 13), of all new employment permitted is accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport mode and all new retail permitted (23 of 23) is accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport modes (LI 10).

Regeneration

Further elements of the Aberdare Town Centre Regeneration Strategy were being implemented during 2015-2016 (LI 19).

Comment

The monitoring targets for Policy CS1 require **40%** of the LDP allocations in the NSA to be subject to planning consent or implemented by 2015 and 100% to be subject to planning consent or implemented by 2021. To date, 15 allocations have either been implemented, subject to planning consent or part of the allocation has been permitted. This equates to **33%** of all 45 Strategic Site, residential, employment, retail and transportation allocations in the NSA. The Council recognises that the delivery of new development in the NSA in challenging economic conditions is going to be relatively slow, particularly on large residential allocations. That being said, it is clear that there is a continued delivery of new houses in the NSA, both market and affordable, with 1,775 dwelling built here since the

start of the plan period in 2006 and 175 during 2015-2016. A total of 1,719 dwellings have been approved since the adoption of the plan in 2011, with 201 of these approved throughout the past year. The Strategic Sites in the north are making slow but steady progress with development of the college campus on the Robertstown site commencing during the monitoring period along with planning permission being granted for a supermarket on the Hirwaun site. Pre-applications discussions for bringing forward and master-planning the Strategic Sites in the north are progressing well.

There has been progress with regards to employment in the North during the monitoring period also with permission granted for a mixed-use scheme on Ferndale and Highfield Industrial Estate (NSA 14.1) and development commencing on land north of Fifth Avenue in Hirwaun (NSA 14.2). The Council believes that the significant investment from both the public and private sector which has taken place in the NSA since 2006, which is to continue in the future, will lay the foundations for future growth. The Community Infrastructure Levy system is now also in place in RCT. It was determined that there would be no charge for residential development in the NSA, which it is anticipated will encourage further investment here.

It is nevertheless acknowledged that this broad monitoring of policy CS1 is indicating that the implementation of allocations in the NSA are not proceeding at the rate set out in its target. There are considered reasons for this that will be discussed within the specific sections of the report. What is of particular note is the considerable numbers of houses that have actually been built in the area alongside those that have recently received permission in the area, whilst it is presumed that the market is delivering these permissions in line with market demand. It therefore remains the Council's view that the overall strategy delivery can be ameliorated without immediate intervention at this stage or sufficient progress can take place in the latter part of the adopted LDP plan period not to require direct intervention. Accordingly, the performance status is considered to be amber. The rate of delivery will be assessed as part of the review of the LDP.

The Council has further employed innovative ways of stimulating housing such as its unique Developer Forum where barriers to housing investment are discussed and solutions developed. However, we are always exploring new ways to stimulate investment and in July 2015, Cabinet agreed a report entitled 'Strategy for Enabling Housing Development' which set out the details of a project that would involve the disposal of Council owned land at less than best consideration for local housing development.

A pilot area in the Rhondda Fach was chosen because it was considered that the initiative could play a role in rectifying market weaknesses in that area. Stimulating development in this way would also assist in delivering new housing provision, bring about regeneration and assist the local economy by enabling economic activity.

POLICY:	OBJECTIVE:	RELATED POLICIES:																												
CS 2 - Development in the South	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 8	SSA 1 to SSA 27																												
TARGET:	MONITORING TARGET:																													
To ensure sustainable growth in the Southern Strategy Area that benefits Rhondda Cynon Taf as a whole over the Plan period	ADOPTION: None																													
	2015: 40% of allocations																													
	2021: 100% of allocations																													
PERFORMANCE:																														
CORE AND LOCAL OUTPUT INDICATORS:																														
CI 2, CI 4, CI 5, CI 6, CI 8, CI 9, CI 12, LI 9, LI 11 and LI 19																														
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:																														
<p>The objective in the Southern Strategy Area (SSA) is to ensure sustainable growth takes place in a manner that benefits Rhondda Cynon Taf. In order to deliver sustainable growth it is necessary to manage residential and commercial growth in the SSA in a manner that balances the economic potential of the area within its environmental capacity. To fully understand the progress made in achieving this target it is necessary to consider the findings of the monitoring exercise in relation to the following interrelated factors:</p> <p>Housing</p> <p>Below are the house building completion figures in the SSA for 2015-2016, showing previous years completions for comparative purposes;</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>General Market</th> <th>Affordable</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2015-2016</td> <td>344</td> <td>50</td> <td>394</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2014-2015</td> <td>282</td> <td>94</td> <td>376</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2013-2014</td> <td>322</td> <td>36</td> <td>358</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2012-2013</td> <td>243</td> <td>25</td> <td>268</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2011-2012</td> <td>188</td> <td>13</td> <td>201</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2010-2011</td> <td>224</td> <td>57</td> <td>281</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Taking these and previous completions into consideration, an overall total of 2,870 new dwellings have been built in the SSA since the start of the plan period in 2006 (CI 2). During 2015-2016, the Council approved 2,063 new houses in the Southern Strategy</p>				General Market	Affordable	Total	2015-2016	344	50	394	2014-2015	282	94	376	2013-2014	322	36	358	2012-2013	243	25	268	2011-2012	188	13	201	2010-2011	224	57	281
	General Market	Affordable	Total																											
2015-2016	344	50	394																											
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2012-2013	243	25	268																											
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2010-2011	224	57	281																											

Area. Since the adoption of the plan in 2011, **5,237 houses** have been given planning permission in the SSA.

The average density of dwellings given permission on allocated sites in the SSA during 2015-2016 was **37dph**, which sits above the expected level stated in policy SSA 11 (CI 5).

To date, planning permission has been granted and development taken place on the following allocated sites (CI 4):

- SSA 9 - Former OCC Site, Llanilid (part);
- SSA 10.7 – Land at Gwern Heulog Coed Ely;
- SSA 10.12 - Land east of Dolau County Primary School, Bridgend Road, Bryncae;
- SSA 10.13 - West of Llechau, Llanharry;
- SSA 10.15 – Land South of Brynteg Court, Beddau;
- SSA 10.18 – Land South of the Ridings, Tonteg and East of Station Road, Church Village.

To date, planning permission has been granted on the following allocated sites:

- SSA 7 - Former Cwm Colliery and Coking Works, Tyn-y-Nant, Pontypridd;
- SSA 8 – Mwyndy/Talbot Green;
- SSA 9 – Former OCC Site, Llanilid – remainder of site;
- SSA 10.2 - Trane Farm, Tonyrefail;
- SSA 10.3 - Collenna Farm, Tonyrefail;
- SSA 10.5 – Site of the former Hillside Club, Tonyrefail (outline);
- SSA 10.17 – Glyntaff Farm, Rhydyfelin.

Appendix 1 – Status of Allocations provides an update in respect of each individual allocation.

Strategic Sites

Details of progress of the Strategic Sites are shown in their respective tables of analysis for policies CS 3.1 to CS 3.8.

Sustainable Development

During 2015-2016, 14.4%, or 32 hectares of a total of 222 hectares of development permitted throughout the County Borough, was on previously developed land or within existing buildings (CI 6).

For information, 189 hectares of development was permitted on greenfield land over the year. Although, 101 hectares of this was for an opencast scheme with an agreed restoration scheme to return it back to its natural condition, whilst another development for 50 hectares on the allocated Llanilid Strategic Site was on a former opencast site that has not been fully restored. Another 30 hectares permitted on this greenfield land was for renewable energy schemes for solar farms or wind turbines.

Of all the developments permitted on land within the SSA in 2015-2016, (totalling 97 hectares), 13.8 hectares or 14.2% were on previously developed land. A further 1.2 hectares or 1.2% of permissions were on or within existing premises (CI 6). A further 82 hectares or 84.5% of permissions in the SSA were on greenfield land, although this includes the 50 hectares on the allocated Llanilid site and 28.9 hectares for the solar and wind energy schemes mentioned above i.e. 96.2% of the greenfield approvals (CI 9).

During 2015-2016, no highly vulnerable development was permitted in C2 flood-risk zones that did not meet all TAN 15 tests (CI 8).

Although Strategic Search Area F (SSAF) of TAN 8 is solely within the NSA, there were no further installations of wind turbines within the 5 KM search area of the SSAF.

Solar energy schemes with the capacity to generate **9.21MW** were installed during 2015-2016 in the SSA.

A further 6 wind turbines in an individual scheme were permitted in the SSA with a capacity of **15 MW** of energy, while 2 large solar farms were permitted with a joint capacity of **9 MW** (CI 12).

3 SINC have been affected by proposed development permitted in the SSA during 2015-2016, two of these are subject to agreed mitigation schemes, with another affecting just 100 square metres of SINC (LI 11).

Economic Activity

The Council granted a sizeable application in August 2015 for industrial development in the SSA at Parc Eirin, Tonyrefail. The application for 9,272m² (gross) of industrial mixed development comprises three business units. Whilst not granted on an allocation, the permission is testament to the recovering economy and the willingness of companies to invest in RCT, as well as making a further contribution to the Council's employment land bank. There were other considerable permissions for redevelopment of existing employment sites across the SSA.

Development is well advanced for the infrastructure to accommodate the retail permissions at the Mwyndy Strategic Site. The development of the retail allocation in Pontypridd, SSA 15.1 has long since been developed.

Further information is given regarding these issues in the relevant analysis of results for CS 6 and CS 7 below. Further information on any proposals for these sites is also detailed in Appendix 1 – Status of Allocations.

Sustainable Transportation / Accessibility

During 2015-2016, 1 further allocated transportation scheme was permitted or implemented in the SSA (LI 9):

- SSA 21.2 -Extension to Connect 2 scheme Pontypridd was completed.

Listed below are other schemes completed to date:

- SSA 20 - Taffs Well Station Park and Ride;
- SSA 21.1 - Treforest Connect 2 and SSA 21.2 - Extension of Connect 2 scheme to Pontypridd, are in effect one scheme and are fully complete and operational;
- SSA 21.3 – Maesycloed to Porth Cycle route;
- SSA 21.4 – Glyntaff to Nantgarw;
- SSA 21.6 - Pontypridd to Tonyrefail via Llantrisant; sections 1 and 2 are now complete, and the third section is subject to planning permission;
- SSA 18.2- Talbot Green Bypass dualling – a long term construction project has begun to further improve the Mwyndy Cross roundabout.

In the Southern Strategy Area the A473 Llanharan Bypass is included within the SE Wales Valleys LTP and enhancements to key junctions taking place in relation to the A473 Talbot Green Bypass. There has been funding secured for the Trallwn to Cilfynydd cycle route, policy SSA 21.5.

Further detail in relation to the transportation allocations may be seen in Appendix 1 – Status of Allocations.

During 2015-2016, the LDP and Development Management process has been successful in guiding development to sustainable locations. 99.95% of all new houses permitted during 2015-2016 are accessible and within 400 metres of at least one or more transport mode.

92.3% (12 of 13), of all new employment permitted is accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport mode and all new retail permitted (23 of 23) is accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport modes.

Regeneration

Further elements of the Pontypridd Town Centre Regeneration Strategy were being implemented during 2015-2016. The regeneration programme will result in an investment of £14m in commercial property and public realm improvements in the town centre during 2010-2015 (LI 19).

Comment

As with Policy CS 1, the monitoring targets for Policy CS 2 require **40%** of the LDPs allocations in the SSA to be subject to planning consent or implemented by 2015 and 100% be subject to planning consent or implemented by 2021. To date, 21 allocations have

either been implemented, subject to planning consent or part of the allocation has been permitted. This equates to **55%** of all 38 Strategic Site, residential, employment, retail and transportation allocations in the SSA.

It is also evidenced that there is a continued significant delivery of new houses in the SSA, both market and affordable, with 2,870 dwellings built since the start of the plan period and **376** during the 2015-2016 period. In total, 5,237 houses have been permitted in the SSA since the adoption of the plan in 2011, with 2,063 during the monitoring year. Again, it is considered that the overall delivery of these permissions will come forward alongside their market demand. These are positive results particularly given the challenging economic conditions.

The Council is therefore confident that the monitoring target for CS 2 is being met.

POLICY:	OBJECTIVE:	RELATED POLICIES:
CS 3.1 – Former Maerdy Colliery	1, 2, 4, 5, 7 & 10	NSA 4
TARGET:	MONITORING TARGET:	
The construction of 1ha of B1 and/or B2 of employment land, visitors centre and area of informal recreation	ADOPTION: None	
	2015: Submission of application	
	2021: Development Complete	
PERFORMANCE:		
CORE AND LOCAL OUTPUT INDICATORS:		
LI 14, LI 15, LI 16, LI 17 and LI 18		
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:		
<p>The Maerdy Colliery Strategic Site has been subject to partial land reclamation, although public funding is required to reclaim the major elements of the site. There have been some agreements reached with the wind farm development to provide access across the site and some funding has been agreed for small amounts of work but the main reclamation scheme is still unfortunately dormant. It is hoped that the wind farm will also generate some funding for design works for the site. Land reclamation is not currently a Welsh Government funding priority. The Council continues to explore the potential for private funding. As part of the wind farm proposal, considerable engineering works will be carried out to allow access to the wind farm and in doing so will significantly improve access into the Strategic Site and to the area designated for a visitor centre. Section 106 planning obligations attached to the development will provide a significant contribution to the leisure elements of the Strategic Site.</p>		

Although the employment allocation has not yet been delivered, it is considered that the overall site is progressing and will be delivered during the plan period. The Council remains confident that the monitoring targets will be met.

POLICY:	OBJECTIVE:	RELATED POLICIES:
CS 3.2 – Former Fernhill Colliery	1, 2, 4, 5, 7 & 10	NSA 5
TARGET:	MONITORING TARGET:	
The construction of between 350-400 dwellings, a local retail centre and area of informal recreation	ADOPTION: None	
	2015: Submission of application	
	2021: Development complete	
PERFORMANCE:		
CORE AND LOCAL OUTPUT INDICATORS RESULTS:		
LI 14, LI 15, LI 16, LI 17 and LI 18		
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:		
<p>During 2015-2016 there have been no further discussions or proposals in relation to this Strategic Site.</p> <p>The Council will continue to monitor the status of the site and do everything that it can to assist the site in coming forward for development, although it is acknowledged that the target may be difficult to meet in the near future. Intervention will be considered as part of any review of the LDP.</p>		

POLICY:	OBJECTIVE:	RELATED POLICIES:
CS 3.3 – Former Phurnacite Plant	1, 2, 4, 5, 7 & 10	NSA 6
TARGET:	MONITORING TARGET:	

The construction of 500 dwellings, 5.9 hectares of employment, a new primary school and area of formal/informal recreation	ADOPTION: None
	2015: Submission of planning application
	2021: Development complete
PERFORMANCE:	
CORE AND LOCAL OUTPUT INDICATORS:	
LI 14, LI 15, LI 16, LI 17 and LI 18	
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:	
<p>There have been pre-application discussions between the Council, the site owners (Coal Products Limited) and the Welsh Government who control the access into the site. Significant investment has already been made in remediating the site. An initial master-plan and brief for the site has been produced.</p> <p>The landowner of the site would like to start to bring the site forward for development and it is understood that an agreement is close with Welsh Government in relation to accessing the site. Further land reclamation solutions would need to be implemented in order for the site to then come forward. The Council is confident that the site will be delivered.</p>	

POLICY:	OBJECTIVE:	RELATED POLICIES:
CS 3.4 – Land at Robertstown / Abernant	1, 2, 4, 5, 7 & 10	NSA 7
TARGET:	MONITORING TARGET:	
The construction of between 500-600 dwellings, 3.7 hectares of employment/leisure, a new primary school, medical centre and area of informal recreation	ADOPTION: None	
	2015: Planning permission / implementation of development	
	2021: Development completed	
PERFORMANCE:		
CORE AND LOCAL OUTPUT INDICATORS:		
LI 14, LI 15, LI 16, LI 17 and LI 18		
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:		

Planning permission was granted for a supermarket on the Robertstown element of the site on the 1st April 2015, following call-in of the planning application by Welsh Government and a public inquiry being held in November 2014.

The new college campus that received approval in July 2015, on this lower part of the Roberstown site, is well under construction which will provide significant numbers of new jobs for those working in the college whilst also contributing to the training and developing of skills of the local population.

Pre-application discussions with the new owners and potential developers of the wider Abernant residential elements of the Strategic Site are at an advanced stage, with the hospital buildings now demolished and cleared.

The development and interest shown in the site is such that the Council is confident that the monitoring targets will be met without intervention.

POLICY:	OBJECTIVE:	RELATED POLICIES:
CS 3.5 – Land South of Hirwaun	1, 2, 4, 5, 7 & 10	NSA 8
TARGET:	MONITORING TARGET:	
The construction of 400 dwellings, 36 hectares of employment, a new primary school, 2000m ² retail floorspace, medical/community centre and area of informal recreation	ADOPTION: None	
	2015: Planning permission / implementation of development	
	2021: Development complete	
PERFORMANCE:		
CORE AND LOCAL OUTPUT INDICATORS:		
LI 14, LI 15, LI 16, LI 17 and LI 18		
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:		
<p>There has been an approval of an outline application for 2,000m² retail development within the local centre element of the site. It is anticipated that the determination of this application will provide more certainty on the ability of other parts of the Strategic Site to come forward.</p> <p>Further detailed pre-application discussions have taken place with regards to the residential and employment elements of the site. Procedures have actively been set in motion to enable the numerous landowners of the site to come together to take forward its</p>		

development. Work is currently taking place to prepare a master-plan for the site. It is considered that the residential element of the site can come forward in advance of the dualling of the A465. It is acknowledged that much of the employment element of the site will not take place until the open casting and subsequent restoration has taken place.

The substantial advancement of the pre-extraction of minerals here will allow for this development to come forward in accordance with the phasing strategy of the site.

The Cardiff Capital Region ‘City Deal’ provides further investment opportunities for the Heads of Valleys area, including transport schemes such as the electrification of the rail line as part of the South East Wales Metro and the extension of the passenger rail service to Hirwaun. Both of these schemes will support the development of the NSA 8 Strategic Site in conjunction with potential strategic employment sites which could provide jobs and investment within the area. It is anticipated that Hirwaun will become a hub for the energy sector and that the development of infrastructure including the A465; Aberdare to Hirwaun bypass and transport interchange will facilitate significant development within and around this Key Settlement.

The Council is confident that the monitoring targets are being met.

POLICY:	OBJECTIVE:	RELATED POLICIES:
CS 3.6 – Cwm Colliery and Coking Works	1, 2, 4, 5, 7 & 10	SSA 7
TARGET:	MONITORING TARGET:	
The construction of between 800-950 dwellings, 1.9 hectares of employment, a new primary school and area of informal recreation	ADOPTION: None	
	2015: Submission of planning application	
	2021: Development complete	
PERFORMANCE:		
CORE AND LOCAL OUTPUT INDICATORS:		
LI 14, LI 15, LI 16, LI 17 and LI 18		
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:		
There has been an approval of an outline application on the site for the demolition of the existing structures, (retention of listed tower), site remediation, land restoration and development to provide a mix of uses including 851 residential units (use class C3), a primary school and open space.		

The initial monitoring target has been met and the Council is confident that the final monitoring target will be met.

POLICY:	OBJECTIVE:	RELATED POLICIES:
CS 3.7 – Mwyndy/Talbot Green Area	1, 2, 4, 5, 7 & 10	SSA 8
TARGET:	MONITORING TARGET:	
The construction of 500 dwellings, 15 hectares of employment, 23,400m ² new retail floorspace, 10,000m ² of leisure floorspace, a primary school, library/community facility and area of informal recreation	ADOPTION: Planning Permission B1 & Residential Development	
	2015: Submission of planning application and implementation of development	
	2021: Development completed	
PERFORMANCE:		
CORE AND LOCAL OUTPUT INDICATORS:		
LI 14, LI 15, LI 16, LI 17 and LI 18		
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:		
<p>There is a full approval for a superstore within the proposed town centre element of the Strategic Site, along with the infrastructure for the wider new town centre. The construction of this infrastructure is well advanced. The town centre has outline consent and comprises A1 retail space, A2 financial and professional service space, A3 food and drink space, B1 office space, a cinema, hotel, carparking and related infrastructure.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the determination of the retail elements of the Strategic Site will provide the platform for the employment and residential proposals across the wider site to come forward. There have been advanced pre-application discussion on the residential element of the site.</p> <p>Certain elements of the initial monitoring target have been met, whilst the Council is confident that the remaining targets will be met.</p>		

POLICY:	OBJECTIVE:	RELATED POLICIES:
CS 3.8 – Former OCC Site Llanilid	1, 2, 4, 5, 7 & 10	SSA 9
TARGET:	MONITORING TARGET:	
The construction of 1950-2100 dwellings, 2,500m ² retail floorspace, a medical centre, library/community facility, a new primary school and associated public open space.	ADOPTION: 248 dwellings	
	2015: Planning permission granted and implementation of development	
	2021: Development complete	
PERFORMANCE:		
CORE AND LOCAL OUTPUT INDICATORS:		
LI 14, LI 15, LI 16, LI 17 and LI 18		
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:		
<p>A section of the site has consent for 240 dwellings and is being developed, with 160 completed so far.</p> <p>The remainder of the site benefits from planning permission, which is subject to the CIL process. This is a comprehensive 'hybrid' planning application (full and outline) comprising of up to 1,850 dwellings and a neighbourhood centre, (including community & leisure facilities, primary school, retail and commercial floorspace). Other elements in the proposal include highways infrastructure, strategic landscape areas and public open space.</p> <p>Certain elements of the initial monitoring target have been met, whilst the Council is confident that the remaining targets will be met.</p>		

POLICY:	OBJECTIVE:	RELATED POLICIES:
CS 4 – Housing Requirements	1 & 9	CS 3, AW 1, NSA 5, NSA 7 – 9 & SSA 7 - 10
TARGET:	MONITORING TARGET:	
Land will be made available for the construction of 14,385 new dwellings over the Plan period.	ADOPTION: 1751 Dwellings	
	2015: 8631 Dwellings	
	2021: 14,385 Dwellings	

PERFORMANCE:

CORE AND LOCAL OUTPUT INDICATORS:

CI 1, CI 2, CI 4 , CI 6 and LI 1

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:

Policy CS 4 requires the provision of land for the development of 14,385 new dwellings over the plan period. The current Joint Housing Land Availability Study (2016) indicates that Rhondda Cynon Taf has a 1.5 years housing land supply on the 1st April 2015 down from 2.4 year supply the previous year in 2015 (CI 1).

Shown below are the dwelling completion figures for Rhondda Cynon Taf from 2010-2011 through to 2015-2016:

	General Market	Affordable	Total
2015 - 2016	471	98	569
2014 - 2015	439	114	553
2013 - 2014	475	59	534
2012 - 2013	337	77	414
2011 - 2012	318	39	357
2010 - 2011	384	78	462

Taking these and previous completions into consideration, an overall total of **4,645** new dwellings were built in Rhondda Cynon Taf since the start of the plan period in 2006 (CI 2).

During 2015-2016, the Council approved 2,264 new houses in Rhondda Cynon Taf, this contributes to an overall total of **7,020** new dwellings permitted across the authority since the adoption of the plan in 2011. This equates to 1,404 units per year.

The chart below shows the total of allocated residential land and units permitted up to the end of the monitoring year, including this as a percentage of overall allocated residential land (CI 4).

	<i>Size (ha)/Units</i>	<i>% Allocated Land/ % Allocated Units</i>
Up to 2011	30.76 / 589	7.96% / 6.4%
2011 - 2012	10.98 / 244	2.84% / 2.65%
2012 - 2013	5.37 / 151	1.39% / 1.64%
2013 - 2014	19.38 / 531	5.02% / 5.77%
2014 - 2015	50.58 / 950	13.1% / 10.32%

2015 - 2016	76.12 / 1,852	19.7% / 20.1%
Totals to date	193 / 4,317	50% / 46.9%

The 1,852 dwellings permitted on allocated sites during 2015-2016 equates to 81.8% of the overall total of 2,264 dwellings permitted during the year.

The residential allocations currently being developed or otherwise with planning permission are listed in the analysis of policies CS 1 and CS 2. The statuses of all allocations are shown in further detail in Appendix 1 - Status of Allocations.

The average density of housing permitted on allocated housing sites during the 2015-2016 AMR period was 37 dph. This is clearly a high figure and more than meets desired density of the LDP policy (CI 5).

Although below the annual target figure, the construction rate during 2015-2016 represents a continued increase on previous years' building activity, of 2.9% on last year's total, whilst a continuous increase has been seen since the lowest completion total in 2011-2012. In fact there has been a 59% increase in housing delivery since that year. It is further evidenced that there is a continued delivery of new houses in Rhondda Cynon Taf, both market and affordable, with 4,645 dwellings built since the start of the plan period. 569 of these were built during the 2015-2016 AMR.

The global economic recession had a significant effect on the operations of the housing market in the early years of the LDP. The situation in Rhondda Cynon Taf mirrored that of many South East Wales authorities. The under-performance of the housing market locally was attributable to economic conditions and not necessarily to the availability of land. Now that the level of housebuilding activity has improved with the economic climate, it is becoming more important to reconsider the housing land requirement as well as land supply issues.

The average house price (paid) in 2015/16 was £118,659.03 this has increased significantly over the last few years demonstrating an 8.4% increase since the 2013/14 monitoring period which quoted an average price of £109,470.

The result of the Joint Housing Land Availability Study (2016) illustrates an issue with medium-term land availability, since it indicates that there is sufficient housing land to last for only 1.5 years (reduced from 2.4 years in 2015 and from 2.8 years in 2014), compared to the requirement for authorities to have a 5-year supply. The housing land supply is calculated using the residual method, based on the adopted LDP housing land requirement, LDP housing land allocations and other sites with planning permission. The annual JHLAS reports have attributed this low figure partly to the proportion of brownfield land in the supply (where a longer lead-in time after grant of planning permission is required, to allow for site preparation), and partly to the effect of the large Strategic Sites (that have development programmes well in excess of 5 years).

It is also increasingly clear that the LDP housing land requirement is unrealistically high. In

common with other authorities in Wales with an adopted LDP, where the housing land requirement appears to be well above the construction industry's capacity to deliver, the residual method produces an annually increasing shortage, which despite the improved levels of house building activity, presents an increasingly unattainable target each year. This scenario will persist until such time as the plan period has been rolled forward, involving a revised housing requirement figure based on evidence of housing need derived from the latest available population and household projections, and a reassessment of the supply of sites for housing.

Rhondda Cynon Taf has undertaken initial analysis and interpretation of the updated Household Projections issued by Welsh Government in February 2014. Based on a broad calculation using these revised figures, 9,500 new dwellings will be needed to meet projected housing need between 2011 and 2031 and therefore a much lower annual build rate of around 600 dwellings per year would need to be built from here on. This is also considering a high level assumption. In this respect, recent house building figures in RCT are meeting this need.

It is nevertheless acknowledged that the target of delivery of the housing numbers identified in the LDP is not being met. The plan identified a need of 14,385 dwellings to be built by 2021, at a rate of 959 dwellings per year throughout the plan period. This accorded with Welsh Government's population projections at the time of the LDP plan preparation. The target for 2015 was the completion of 8,631 units, whilst 4,465 have been completed during the plan period to date.

It is considered that significant permissions by the Council over the past year, totalling 6,956 since just 2011 gives considerable opportunity for housing development to continue to grow. It should however be recognised, as alluded to in earlier sections, that the house builders are somewhat restricted by market demand with respect to their ability to build greater numbers of housing.

Therefore in terms of the actual monitoring targets as they stand it is accepted that they are not being achieved and it is unlikely that this will be addressed without specific intervention. The Council in response to the underperformance of this policy is exploring and progressing a number of methods of intervention which aim to address the issues that are affecting deliverability of the sites. Such methods of intervention include firstly the unique Developer Forum where barriers to housing investment are discussed and solutions developed and the Strategy for Enabling Housing Development detailed above in section CS1. Development proposals have come forward on significant windfall sites across the County Borough in recent years, whilst many further are expected on the sites of the former comprehensive schools in Aberdare and the College site in Trecynon.

The Council is confident these methods along with the continued improvement in the housing market will support the year on year increase in delivery of housing in Rhondda Cynon Taf which has been seen since the beginning of the plan period.

POLICY:	OBJECTIVE:	RELATED POLICIES:
CS 5 – Affordable Housing	1, 6 & 10	AW 3, NSA 11 & SSA 12
TARGET:	MONITORING TARGET:	
To provide 1770 affordable homes in Rhondda Cynon Taf over the Plan period.	ADOPTION: 237 Dwellings	
	2015: 1062 Dwellings	
	2021: 1770 Dwellings	
PERFORMANCE:		
CORE AND LOCAL OUTPUT INDICATORS:		
CI 2, CI 4, LI 1, LI 2, LI 3 and LI 4		
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:		
<p>Policy CS 5 seeks the provision of 1,770 affordable homes over the LDP period. During 2015-2016 98 new affordable homes were built in Rhondda Cynon Taf. This brings the total number of affordable homes built since the start of the plan period in 2006 to 701. A total of 326 affordable units were approved during 2015-2016.</p> <p>The delivery of new affordable housing in Rhondda Cynon Taf is intrinsically linked to the development of new general market housing. The downturn in volume house building experienced nationally caused by the economic recession has resulted in a reduction of house building activity in the County Borough and therefore a reduction in the provision of affordable homes. Accordingly, as with the analysis of the monitoring of the general housing requirements in CS 4 above, it is considered that as the economy recovers and further housebuilding continues on recently permitted sites in the south of the County Borough, (where there is the greater need for affordable housing units) that opportunities to secure further affordable homes will increase.</p> <p>Again, however, the Council recognises that the targets are not quite being met, and that forms of intervention may be required. As part of the review of the LDP, the provision and delivery of housing and affordable housing will be comprehensively evaluated. Furthermore, the review will also evaluate the current need for market and affordable housing, again using the updated household and population projection alongside the Local Housing Market Assessment.</p>		

POLICY:	OBJECTIVE:	RELATED POLICIES:
CS 6 – Employment Requirements	3	AW 11, NSA 14 – 16 & SSA 14
TARGET:	MONITORING TARGET:	
Development of 51 hectares for 'strategic' employment and 47 hectares for 'local' employment opportunities	ADOPTION: None	
	2015: 25ha 'strategic' employment / 23 ha for 'local' employment	
	2021: 51ha for 'strategic employment' / 47 ha for 'local' employment	
PERFORMANCE:		
CORE AND LOCAL OUTPUT INDICATORS:		
CI 3, CI 4, CI 6 and LI 5		
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:		
<p>Policy CS 6 of the LDP allocates 51 hectares of land for strategic employment and 47 hectares for local employment purposes. One of the local employment allocations (NSA 14.2) commenced development during 2015-2016. Another local site (NSA 14.1) received outline planning permission for a mixed-use scheme on the 16th May 2016 at the former Chubb Factory, Ferndale (although this is outside the current monitoring period).</p> <p>The 4.17ha allocation at Hirwaun Industrial Estate (NSA 14.2) has begun to implement its consent for a sustainable waste resource recovery and energy production plant at Fifth and Ninth Avenues. This scheme includes a combined heat and power plant with capacity of 20 MW. Two buildings have been erected to date and works are ongoing.</p> <p>The mixed-use application at allocation NSA 14.1 in Ferndale has received outline permission for a comprehensive mixed-use redevelopment of the former Chubb Factory site, comprising up to 172 residential dwellings (Class C3) and up to 20,750 sq ft of mixed-use commercial, retail and employment floor-space (Class A1, A2, A3, B1 and D1. This consists broadly of the middle third section of the site; although there are large areas of the employment site in alternative use, there are significant employment proposals, and an opportunity to bring considerable investment to one of the most deprived communities in RCT. It is considered that this development could be a catalyst for the remainder of the employment site to come forward in its allocated use. The application has further been conditioned to deliver the employment element at the outset of the development stage.</p> <p>The Council granted a sizeable permission in August 2015 for industrial development. The application for 9,272m² (gross) of industrial mixed development comprises three business</p>		

units to be located on long since reclaimed land at Parc Eirin, Tonyrefail, opposite the considerable 'Ensinger' site, in the Southern Strategy Area. A further 3 hectares of the former Hepworth Business Park employment site at Talbot Green has also been given permission for redevelopment, for considerable mixed-use commercial units.

Permission was also granted for a car sales/ showroom on the Gateway site in Abercynon. The development will see a long term vacant site be occupied by The Trade Centre Wales which is a successful regional company and will see over 80 jobs created, with the majority of new jobs being taken by people who live in the County Borough.

The former Sogefi site in Llantrisant has also received planning permission for a bus depot which forms the first phase of complete redevelopment of the site as Edwards Coaches Headquarters. The relocation of the company to a larger site ensures the continued growth of a highly successful, local business and major employer in RCT. (The permission was just outside of the monitoring period).

Whilst not granted on allocations, the permission is testament to the recovering economy and the willingness of companies to invest in RCT, as well as making a further contribution to the Council's employment land bank. Many further smaller scale permissions have been given for B1, B2 and B8 uses.

In addition to the allocated sites, the Council annually monitors 102 operational employment sites across the County Borough, which contain approximately 1,667 units. The vast majority of these units are traditional B1, B2 and B8 employment uses although the units also consist of other uses suited to industrial estates such as sui generis and certain D Class uses. As well as ensuring the ability of new sites to come forward, the LDP plays a key role in protecting and managing these sites. The monitoring process indicates that there is an average vacancy rate of 14.7% across the employment units of these operational sites. Some of these sites also have considerable areas of cleared or undeveloped land within them for future development and inward investment opportunities.

In designating the employment sites in the LDP, the Council considered that the most appropriate and suitable sites were allocated to meet the calculated need for new major employment land in the County Borough.

Land allocated for employment use at the Mwyndy Strategic Site, SSA 8 along with the employment allocation at Coedely, SSA 14.1 (both owned by the Welsh Government) are located in what are considered the most desirable locations of the County Borough. The reasons for them not coming forward for development are not specifically known, although it may be partially due to the economic downturn and partially due to land ownership issues.

The major employment allocation as part of the Hirwaun Strategic Site, NSA 8 is meanwhile dependent on the timing of the opencast being completed, but, as stated above, active processes are in place to see the site master-planned for its future development. It is hoped that the completion of the mining will coincide with the construction of the A465 Heads of the Valley dualling scheme – a significant Welsh Government investment in the northern valleys area – with the site then being a key enabler for economic regeneration in

the locale.

The Council again acknowledges that the specific target is not being met with regards to the delivery of its allocated employment land. Despite this however there is considerable, encouraging economic activity happening on the existing employment sites. Such economic activity has included the creation of 790 new businesses within RCT during 2014 (Stats Wales). This is above the South East Wales average of 596 business births for the same year. Accordingly, it is considered that this monitoring indicator could be amended to better reflect the employment activity in the County Borough. Whilst it is expected that the delivery of new employment land will be challenging, the Council is confident that as the economy recovers and opportunities to secure employment related inward investment increase, it will have both suitable allocated and existing sites to meet this need.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to considered all possible avenues on how we could and should intervene from a planning policy point of view through the LDP revisions process.

POLICY:	OBJECTIVE:	RELATED POLICIES:
CS 7 - Retail Development	2 & 6	NSA 17 SSA 15
TARGET:	MONITORING TARGET:	
Improve viability and vitality of 8 Key Settlements and 3 Principal Towns in Rhondda Cynon Taf over the Plan period Development of between 34,400m ² - 36,400m ² new retail floorspace throughout the County Borough over the Plan period	ADOPTION: None	
	2015: 40% of allocations	
	2021: 100% of allocations	
PERFORMANCE:		
CORE AND LOCAL OUTPUT INDICATORS:		
CI 4, CI 6, CI 7, LI 6, LI 7 and LI 8		
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:		
The LDP allocates land for the development of between 34,400sqm and 36,400sqm of new retail floorspace. During the monitoring period a S106 agreement was signed granting planning permission for a supermarket including access improvements on the Strategic Site in Hirwaun. Permission for a small local retail centre was also approved as part of a larger application which also included housing on Bryncae Industrial Estate, Llanharan. The construction of this site also commenced		

within the monitoring period. In the Principal Town of Pontypridd a new Lidl store was constructed and began trading, whilst a significant extension to an existing unit in the Town centre has resulted in a large Poundland store opening in 2016.

Construction has commenced for the 10,976 sqm gross floorspace superstore on the Mwyndy-Talbot Green Strategic Site (along with the wider infrastructure), which was permitted during 2014-15 monitoring period. The wider Town Centre was approved for approximately 34,000 sqm of retail and further significant leisure, office and hotel floor space. The permission at the Llanilid Strategic Site will also see the creation of the local centre there, with some retail element.

Since the adoption of the LDP, planning permission has also been granted for 7,717sqm of new retail floor space at Pontypridd Retail Park/Brown Lennox - SSA 15.1. This 2 hectare site is now fully developed and operational.

Along with the progress being made with the allocations and permissions the Principal Town of Pontypridd has seen the expansion of the National retailer B & M and the continued investment in the shops in the centre with the recent refurbishment and subsequent occupation of the new Pep & Co store. Pontypridd has also seen the development of a Business Improvement District (BID) which it is hoped will see further improvements to the retail offer in Pontypridd.

Progress is being made with regards to retail in the LDP accordingly, it is not considered that intervention is required to ameliorate the progression of these permissions being developed, although the broader retail need in Rhondda Cynon Taf will be fully assessed through the review of the LDP.

The table below shows the vacancy rates for the Principal Towns and Key Settlements over recent years (LI 7):

Principal Town / Key Settlement	Vacancy Rate 2015/2016	Vacancy Rate 2014/2015	Vacancy Rate 2013/2014	Vacancy Rate 2012/2013	Vacancy Rate 2011/2012	Vacancy Rate 2010/2011
Aberdare	9%	9.0%	12.7%	8.18%	6.0%	12.9%
Pontypridd	8.7%	8.7%	9.2%	9.22%	7.28%	6.63%
Llantrisant/Talbot Green	2.6%	1.7%	2.7%	2.68%	3.57%	0.9%
Ferndale	13%	10.9%	8.7%	6.52%	8.7%	13.0%
Hirwaun	22%	9.5%	0%	0%	4.76%	4.76%
Llanharan	0%	0%	10%	0%	0%	5.0%
Mountain Ash	12.7%	18.3%	20.4%	23.66%	18.28%	19.35%
Porth	10.8%	14.2%	15.8%	11.48%	10.92%	15.13%

Tonypanyd	20.53%	19.7%	18.4%	23.33%	18.24%	18.24%
Tonyrefail	12.9%	13.5%	9.6%	11.53%	7.55%	9.26%
Treorchy	9%	6.8%	4.2%	6.83%	5.93%	4.2%
Overall Vacancy Rates	10.6%	10.8%	11.4%	10.8%	9.1%	10.7%

The overall town centre vacancy rate for the Principal Towns and Key Settlements is 10.6%, as determined by the Council's annual retail survey conducted in January/February 2016. This is nearly 2% higher than the UK average town centre vacancy rate of 8.7% in January 2016 (Springboard). When compared with the Welsh average town centre vacancy rates, Rhondda Cynon Taf fared exceptionally well, with vacancy rates being 13.7% for Wales as a whole in January 2016.

The individual Principal Town vacancy rates are generally low and especially Llantrisant/ Talbot Green which has a vacancy rate of 2.6% vastly below both the UK and Wales average. The Key Settlements vacancy rates are somewhat varied ranging from 0% in Llanharan to almost 21% in Tonypanyd. All but two of the Principal Towns and Key Settlements are below the Wales average vacancy rate (Hirwaun and Tonypanyd) whilst only 2 are above the UK average. The overall vacancy rate continues to fall this indicates a remaining positive vitality and viability within the town centres, and can certainly be attributed in due part to the continued considerable investment in their regeneration.

POLICY:	OBJECTIVE:	RELATED POLICIES:
CS 8 - Transportation	6 & 8	NSA 20 to NSA 23 & SSA 18 to SSA 21
TARGET:	MONITORING TARGET:	
Promote more sustainable forms of transport throughout Rhondda Cynon Taf Reduce need to travel through the development of new services in accessible locations throughout the plan period	ADOPTION: None	
	2015: 40% of allocations	
	2021: 100% of allocations	
PERFORMANCE:		
CORE AND LOCAL OUTPUT INDICATORS:		
LI 9 and LI 10		

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:

The LDP allocates land for a range of transportation schemes, including major highways, roads, public transport, walking and cycling.

Listed below are schemes completed to date of which 2 were completed in 2015-2016 (NSA 21.2 and SSA 21.2).

- NSA 21.2- Land South of Ty Trevithick, adjacent to A470, Abercynon (P&R);
- NSA 21.3 - Expansion of existing park and ride facilities, Robertstown;
- NSA 23.3 - The Heads of the Valley Cycleway & links to Hirwaun Industrial Estate;
- SSA 20 - Taffs Well Station Park and Ride;
- SSA 21.1 - Treforest Connect 2 and SSA 21.2 - Extension of Connect 2 scheme to Pontypridd, are in effect one scheme and are fully complete and operational;
- SSA 21.2- Extension to Connect 2 scheme Pontypridd;
- SSA 21.3 – Maesycoed to Porth cycle route;
- SSA 21.4 – Glyntaff to Nantgarw;
- SSA 21.6 - Pontypridd to Tonyrefail via Llantrisant; section 2 was completed with section 1 previously completed.

In addition to the above progress has been made with other allocated schemes. In the Northern Strategy Area the Mountain Ash Southern Cross Valley Link designs are being progressed for an east-west highway link via an upgraded junction on the A4059; the Mountain Ash Northern Cross Valley Link has also been reviewed as part of the development of the southern link. The park and ride provision for Strategic Site 5 has been included as part of the Cynon Gateway scheme within the SE Wales Valleys LTP. Funding has also been allocated to enable feasibility/design work focussing on access to schools, stations in relation to the Rhondda Community Route Network.

In the Southern Strategy Area the A473 Llanharan Bypass is included within the SE Wales Valleys LTP and enhancements to key junctions taking place in relation to the A473 Talbot Green Bypass. There has been funding secured for the Trallwn to Cilfynydd cycle route, policy SSA 21.5 whilst funding bids have been submitted in relation to the Cynon Valley cycle route NSA 23.2.

As the requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 progress improvements to existing walking and cycling routes will likely be identified and also potential new routes proposed. This process will be complete in September 2017.

Further LDP transportation allocations may also come forward in accordance with the South East Wales Metro system. These include potential for further expansion of the Robertstown Park and Ride scheme and as patronage is expected to increase with Metro proposals, and the existing facilities are likely to reach capacity within the next two years. The park and ride provision at Taffs Well is complete and as Taffs Well is recognised as a key node in the transport network further enhancements are envisaged as part of the Metro/City Deal (SSA 20.6). The construction of park and ride facilities at Porth station is underway and on programme to open in July, further extension to the facility is under

development. The South East Wales Valleys LTP contains proposed schemes to further to increase capacity at Pontyclun and Treforest stations which are likely to reach capacity within the next two years. There is also pressure at Llanharan station, feasibility work is ongoing to identify potential for expansion of the park and ride facilities. The Pontypridd to Tonyrefail via Llantrisant Cycle route (SSA 21.6) has two sections complete, a planning application has been approved for the third section and funding has been allocated to progress with the route from the western end towards cross inn during 2016-2017.

The majority of the undeveloped transportation and cycle route allocation schemes have been included in the South East Wales Valleys Local Transport Plan. This was prepared by the 5 Local Authorities in the area and set out the intended and potential timescales and funding mechanisms for these schemes.

Further information on the progress of the allocated transportation schemes may be seen in Appendix 1 – Status of Allocations.

During 2015-2016, the LDP and Development Management process has been successful in guiding development to sustainable locations. 99.95% of all new houses permitted are accessible and within 400 metres of at least one or more transport mode; 92.3% (12 of 13), of all new employment permitted is accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport mode; and all retail permitted (23 of 23) is accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport mode (LI 10).

The monitoring targets are close to being met, with further consideration given to the funding of these remaining schemes in the near future.

POLICY:	OBJECTIVE:	RELATED POLICIES:
CS 9 - Waste Management	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 & 8	NSA 1 to NSA 27
TARGET:	MONITORING TARGET:	
The development of between 12.5 and 21.7 hectares to meet capacity requirements for waste management over the Plan period	ADOPTION: N/A	
	2015: N/A	
	2021: N/A	
PERFORMANCE:		
CORE AND LOCAL OUTPUT INDICATORS:		
CI 10		

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:

During 2015-2016, 0.75ha of waste management capacity was permitted taking the total permitted to 9.95 hectares of capacity, this equates to 79.6% and 45.9% of the lower and higher capacity requirements of the Regional Waste Plan respectively.

Waste management in Rhondda Cynon Taf during 2015-2016 saw the following rates of disposal;

- 22.59% of waste was land-filled;
- 0.56% of waste was reused;
- 46.29% of waste was recycled;
- 25.95% of waste was subject to energy recovery;
- 13.64% of waste was composted.

It is considered that the monitoring target is being met with regards to waste management. Again, this area will be considered further as part of the review of the LDP, to take into account any necessary amendments as a result of national guidance on Waste.

POLICY:	OBJECTIVE:	RELATED POLICIES:
CS 10 - Minerals	10	AW 14 & SSA 26
TARGET:	MONITORING TARGET:	
Maintain 10-year land bank of permitted aggregates reserves	ADOPTION: N/A	
	2015: N/A	
	2021: N/A	
PERFORMANCE:		
CORE AND LOCAL OUTPUT INDICATORS:		
CI 11		
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS:		
No primary land-won aggregates were permitted for extraction in 2015-2016, with aggregate production in Rhondda Cynon Taf continuing at Craig yr Hesg quarry in Pontypridd and at Hendy and Forest Wood quarries near Pontyclun.		
A full application for a Western extension to the existing Craig yr Hesg Quarry, Pontypridd is currently being considered by the Council. This is for the phased extraction of an		

additional 10 million tonnes of pennant sandstone and an overall restoration scheme for the quarry.

5 SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL MONITORING

- 5.1 The SA of the LDP identifies 22 targets and 25 significant effect indicators which are intended to measure the social, economic and environmental impact of the LDP. The monitoring requirement of the Habitats Regulations Assessment is also being undertaken as part of the SA monitoring process.
- 5.2 A key issue in determining the Plan's sustainability progress is in ensuring the proposed indicators are providing the necessary information to allow prediction of the effects of the plan.

Results of the SA Monitoring

1. Housing	
<i>SA Target</i>	<i>SA Indicator</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce discrepancies between requirement and availability of affordable and special needs housing stock. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of new affordable housing units provided during the year as a percentage of all housing units provided during the year.
Monitoring Results	
<p>During 2015-2016, a total of 569 dwellings, including both market and affordable, were built. 98 of these were affordable, equating to 17% of all houses built during the year. A further 306 affordable units were approved during this period, of a total of 2264 approved dwellings, equating to 13.5%</p> <p>This number and percentage of affordable units provided during the year is a decrease from the previous year's figure. From an SA perspective however the overall figures on affordable housing are generally progressing in the right direction over recent years and the prediction made in the SA of an increase in provision of affordable housing is correct. The SA also predicted that this would have positive long-term effects for health and the economy through the retention of young people and families, especially in the northern areas, where depopulation is an issue.</p> <p>As noted in the analysis of results for CS 5 (Affordable Housing), the delivery of affordable housing is closely tied to the overall house building figures. In order to have a sustained long-term and positive effect on housing, employment and health; the number of affordable homes delivered will need to increase during the plan period. This will be dependent on economic recovery and increased build rates of market housing on a national and local scale.</p>	

2. Culture and Heritage		
SA Target	SA Indicator	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce number of buildings on at risk register (year on year). Maintain/ protect locally designated sites of cultural value and areas of high archaeological value. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings at Risk (absolute number). Number of Designated Sites with Management Plans. 	
Monitoring Results	(Buildings at risk)	(Mgt plans)
<p>April 2015-March 2016:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 47 Buildings at Risk; 7 Designated Sites with Management Plans. <p>April 2014-March 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 47 Buildings at Risk; 7 Designated Sites with Management Plans. <p>April 2013-March 2014:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 47 Buildings at Risk; 7 Designated Sites with Management Plans. <p>April 2012-March 2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 47 Buildings at Risk; 7 Designated Sites with Management Plans. <p>April 2011-March 2012:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 47 Buildings at Risk; 7 Designated Sites with Management Plans. <p>Although buildings may well have been restored (or other listed buildings deteriorated) during this last year, they will only be formally removed/ amended at a Buildings at Risk re-survey. As Cadw have not re-surveyed the listed buildings in RCT since 2011, the indicator results remain as last year. 7 designated sites have management plans.</p>		

This monitoring period has seen a number of very positive investments in Listed Building in the County Borough. This builds on the great work seen in previous monitoring periods such as the redevelopment of Aberdare Town Hall and the very successful redevelopment of the Lido in Ynysangharad Park in Pontypridd.

During this monitoring period there have been a number of improvements to many of the buildings on the heritage at risk list. These include the Black Lion hotel in Aberdare which has been renovated externally and the Labour Exchange (also in Aberdare which has been fully restored and is now occupied. In Pontypridd during this monitoring period Coed Y Lan school has been partially restored and occupied and many properties within the Pontypridd Conservation area have also been restored and are now occupied by new retailers and residential flats above.

3. Communities

SA Target	SA Indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve access to public transport and community facilities for all. Increase % of people with qualifications and improve skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of new housing, employment and retail development accessible by a range of transport modes per annum. Number of enrolments on adult education courses per 1000 population. % of 15/16 year olds achieving the 'core subject indicator' (grade C in GCSE English or welsh and Science in combination).
Monitoring Results	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="background-color: #00FF00; padding: 5px;">(access to transport modes)</div> <div style="background-color: #FFD700; padding: 5px;">(education)</div> </div>

Improve access to public transport and community facilities for all.

April 2015 - March 2016

- 99.95% of all new houses permitted during 2015-2016 are accessible and within 400 metres of at least one or more transport mode.
- 92.3% (12 of 13), of all new employment permitted is accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport mode. The 13th unit is a farm diversification scheme.
- All new retail permitted (23 of 23) are accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport modes.

April 2014 - March 2015

- 99.89% of all new houses permitted during 2014-2015 are accessible and

within 400 metres of at least one or more transport mode.

- 86.6% (13 of 15), of all new employment permitted is accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport mode.
- All new retail permitted (22 of 22) is accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport modes.

April 2013 - March 2014

- 99.6% of all new houses permitted during 2013 -2014 are accessible and within 400 metres of at least one or more transport mode.
- 78.6% (11 of 14), of all new employment permitted is accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport mode.
- All new retail permitted is accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport modes.

April 2012 - March 2013:

- 99.3% of all new housing permitted during 2012-2013 are accessible and within 400 metres of at least one or more transport mode (in addition to the private car).
- 89.5% (17 of 19), of all new employment permitted is accessible/within 400 metres of one or more transport mode.
- 96% (28 of 29) of all retail permitted is accessible/within 400 metres of one or more transport modes.

April 2011 - March 2012:

- 97.7% of all new housing permitted during 2011-2012 are accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport mode.
- 99.7 % of all new employment permitted is accessible/within 400 metres of one or more transport mode.
- 100% of all retail permitted is accessible/within 400 metres of one or more transport modes.

Overall, the indicators measured for accessibility illustrate a very high level of performance. There has been an increase in the percentage of housing permitted within 400m of one or more transport mode to 99.5% and a marked increase with regards to employment from 86.6% to 92.3%, along with this retail maintains its 100% score from last year. It is clear that the LDPs strong policies on public transport are having the predicted positive effect with regard to new development. This will also have positive effects for existing communities in the long term.

Increase % of people with qualifications and improve skills.

April 2015 - March 2016:

- The data was not available for adult education enrolments 2015-2016 due to concerns over the data accuracy. It is hoped that up to date information will be available Q2 2016-2017, however this may not be comparable with

previous data.

- 53.3% of pupils achieved Level 2 threshold in the Core subject indicator in combination or equivalent qualification. This narrowed the gap with the Wales average by 2.4 percentage points in comparison with 2014-2015 (Wales average 54.8)

April 2014 - March 2015:

- 25.1 enrolments on adult education courses per 1000 population, (this being a total of 5,924 enrolments).
- 48.7% of pupils achieving Level 2 threshold in the Core Subject Indicator in combination or equivalent qualification (GCSE C or above).

April 2013 - March 2014:

- 23.5 enrolments on adult education courses per 1000 population, (this being a total of 4,503 enrolments).
- 45.26% of pupils achieving Level 2 threshold in the Core Subject Indicator in combination or equivalent qualification (GCSE C or above).

April 2012 - March 2013:

- 21.66 enrolments on adult education courses per 1000 population;
- 43.3% of 15/16 year olds achieving Level 2 threshold in the Core Subject Indicator in combination or equivalent qualification (GCSE C or above).

April 2011 - March 2012:

- 21.31 enrolments on adult education courses per 1000 population;
- 43% of 15/16 year olds achieving the 'Level 2 threshold in Core Subject Indicator'.

April 2010 - March 2011:

- 26.86 enrolments on adult education courses per 1000 population;
- 42.54% of 15/16 year olds achieving the 'core subject indicator' (grade C in GCSE English or Welsh and Science in combination).

Unfortunately the data for enrolment in adult education classes was not available this year due to concerns over data accuracy. It is hoped that the will be available in 2016-2017, although this may not be comparable with previous years data.

With regard to GCSE performance, the results show another marked increase from last year from 48.7% to 53.3% achieving Level 2 threshold in the Core subject

indicator in combination or equivalent qualification. Although this figure is still below the Welsh average which reports at 54.8% this latest figure greatly reduces this disparity and shows great improvement.(Source: Statistics for Wales - Examination results in Wales, 2015-2016).

4. Health	
SA Target	SA Indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase access to recreation and sports facilities & the countryside. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of visits to indoor and outdoor sports and recreational facilities per 1000 population.
Monitoring Results	
<p>April 2015 - March 2016:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7,425 visits to leisure centres per 1,000 population. <p>April 2014 - March 2015:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8,155 visits to leisure centres per 1,000 population. <p>April 2013 - March 2014:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9,917 visits to leisure centres per 1,000 population. <p>April 2012 - March 2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11,628 visits to local authority sport & leisure centres per 1,000 population where the visitor will be participating in Physical activity. <p>April 2011 - March 2012:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9,876 visits per 1,000 population to indoor and outdoor sports and recreational facilities. <p>April 2010 - March 2011:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9,313 visits per 1,000 population to indoor and outdoor sports and recreational facilities. <p>There has been a steady decrease in the visits to leisure centres over the monitoring period however the reported figure still indicates a high level of participation in exercise and use of leisure centres. The AMR also does not record access to private sports facilities and participation in sports teams and therefore it is not clear whether there is an overall downward trend in participation of leisure activities.</p> <p>Over the monitoring period planning permission has been granted for 17 changes of use to new leisure uses including fitness studios, dance studios and roller-skating activities. This seems to indicate that there is a continued market for private leisure facilities in the County Borough and an indication that participation in</p>	

these activities is continuing in the private sector. National Lido of Wales also continues to attract a large number of visitors to its facilities

5. Economy		
SA Target	SA Indicator	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broaden the Economic base by creating more varied and stronger businesses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic activity by sector. Annual vacancy rates for each Principal Town and Key Settlement. New business started in Rhondda Cynon Taf per annum. 	
Monitoring Results		
Employment by Occupation		
<i>Occupation</i>	<i>% Displayed (NLP, 2008)</i>	<i>% Displayed (2011)</i>
Manufacturing	17.9	17.9
Construction	5.2	5.2
Distribution, hotels & restaurants	21.1	19.1
Transport & communications	4.9	4.9
Finance, IT, other business activities	7.9	6.9
Public admin, education & health	37	35.3
Other services	5.1	4.1
Tourism-related	6.6	6.6

The SA target seeks information regarding economic activity by sector. Data displayed above which shows employment by occupation is no longer available in the above format. In the AMR 2013, the Census 2011 data was shown. This method of data analysis has been continued and collected quarterly. The table below shows the average percentage of employment by occupation for the period April 2013 to March 2014 in this new format for Rhondda Cynon Taf and Wales wide, with the Census 2011 for comparison purpose. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to gain this information on a County Borough level since 2014. This is an indicator that

will need to be re-evaluated and consideration given to the best method of collection and analysis for this indicator.

Occupation of all persons in employment age 16 - 74	Rhondda Cynon Taf 2013-14 (%)	Rhondda Cynon Taf 2011(%)	Wales 2013 -14 (%)	Wales 2011 (%)
1. Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	8.9	7.8	9.4	9.2
2. Professional Occupations	14.4	13.9	18.2	15.8
3. Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	12.9	10.3	12.4	10.8
4. Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	9.8	11.4	11.1	11.1
5. Skilled Trades Occupations	13.0	13.0	12.5	13.4
6. Personal Service Occupations	10.7	11.8	10.2	10.5
7. Sales and Customer Service Occupations	9.0	9.0	8.2	9.0
8. Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	10.7	9.8	7.1	8.1
9. Elementary Occupations	10.4	12.9	11.1	11.9

However, analysis of the data is still applicable 2 years on. Although there are general comparisons between Rhondda Cynon Taf and the data for the whole of Wales, one notable difference is the lower percentage of people within professional occupations in Rhondda Cynon Taf, although this has improved slightly over the from 2011 to 2013-2014. Another is the higher average percentage of people employed in the Process, Plant and Machinery Operatives sector

in the County Borough than in Wales.

The data gives a total of people employed in the above specified occupations, being 93,600 in June 2013, rising to 97,325 in March 2014 in Rhondda Cynon Taf. This is obviously a positive improvement in employment figures, although it omits the figures of people employed in unspecified occupations. Based on the rising employment levels overall in Wales it is hoped that this rise would be continuing within these listed occupations and within other sectors.

In addition to the allocated sites, the Council annually monitors 102 operational employment sites across the County Borough, which contain approximately 1,667 units. The vast majority of these units are traditional B1, B2 and B8 employment uses although the units also consist of other uses suited to industrial estates such as sui generis and certain D Class uses. As well as ensuring the ability of new sites to come forward, the LDP plays a key role in protecting and managing these sites. The monitoring process indicates that there is an average vacancy rate of 14.7% across the employment units of these operational sites. Some of these sites also have considerable areas of cleared or undeveloped land within them for future development and inward investment opportunities.

Retail Centre Vacancy Rates.

Shown below are the annual vacancy rates for the retail premises throughout the 3 Principal Towns and 8 Key Settlements for 2010-2011 to 2015-2016:

Principal Town / Key Settlement	Vacancy Rate 2015/2016	Vacancy Rate 2014/2015	Vacancy Rate 2013/2014	Vacancy Rate 2012/2013	Vacancy Rate 2011/2012	Vacancy Rate 2010/2011
Aberdare	9%	9.0%	12.7%	8.18%	6.0%	12.9%
Pontypridd	8.7%	8.7%	9.2%	9.22%	7.28%	6.63%
Llantrisant/Talbot Green	2.6%	1.7%	2.7%	2.68%	3.57%	0.9%
Ferndale	13%	10.9%	8.7%	6.52%	8.7%	13.0%
Hirwaun	22%	9.5%	0%	0%	4.76%	4.76%
Llanharan	0%	0%	10%	0%	0%	5.0%
Mountain Ash	12.7%	18.3%	20.4%	23.66%	18.28%	19.35%
Porth	10.8%	14.2%	15.8%	11.48%	10.92%	15.13%
Tonypandy	20.53%	19.7%	18.4%	23.33%	18.24%	18.24%
Tonyrefail	12.9%	13.5%	9.6%	11.53%	7.55%	9.26%

Treorchy	9%	6.8%	4.2%	6.83%	5.93%	4.2%
Overall Vacancy Rates	10.6%	10.8%	11.4%	10.8%	9.1%	10.7%

The overall town centre vacancy rate for the Principal Towns and Key Settlements is 10.6%, as determined by the Council's annual retail survey conducted in January/February 2016. This is nearly 2% higher than the UK average town centre vacancy rate of 8.7% in January 2016 (Springboard). When compared with the Welsh average town centre vacancy rates, Rhondda Cynon Taf fared exceptionally well, with vacancy rates being 13.7% for Wales as a whole in January 2016.

The individual Principal Town vacancy rates are generally low; especially Llantrisant/Talbot Green which has a vacancy rate of 2.6% vastly below both the UK and Wales average. The Key Settlements vacancy rates are somewhat varied ranging from 0% in Llanharan to almost 21% in Tonypany. All but two of the Principal Towns and Key Settlements are above the Wales average vacancy rate (Hirwaun and Tonypany) whilst only 2 are below the UK average. The overall vacancy rate continues to fall; this is positive and indicates vitality and viability within the town centres. This can certainly be attributed in part to the considerable, continued investment in town centre regeneration.

Business Birth Rates in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The timing of the release of business birth rates does not correspond with the financial year/AMR monitoring period. Data is released approximately 11 months after the reference period, as such, the latest available data relates to the 2014 calendar year when the business birth rate was 790 which is a positive increase from previous years of 785 and 505.

6. Employment	
SA Target	SA Indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase opportunities to work within the district. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> [%] increase in local job growth by sector/ reduction in numbers of economically inactive. [%] of resident working age population employed.
Monitoring Results	
<p>2015-2016</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21.4% of all working age people in Rhondda Cynon Taf are economically inactive (excluding students); 70% employment rate in Rhondda Cynon Taf, (of persons aged 16-64 years) 	

(Stats Wales).

2014-2015:

- 23.5% of all working age people in Rhondda Cynon Taf are economically inactive;
- 67.4% employment rate in Rhondda Cynon Taf, (of persons aged 16-64 years) (Stats Wales).

2013-2014:

- 19.7% of all working age people in Rhondda Cynon Taf are economically inactive;
- 68.20% employment rate in Rhondda Cynon Taf, (of persons aged 16-64 years) (Stats Wales).

2012-2013:

- 24% of all working age people in Rhondda Cynon Taf are economically inactive;
- 62.5% employment rate in Rhondda Cynon Taf. (of persons aged 16-64 years) (Stats Wales).

2011-2012:

- 25.3% of all working age people in Rhondda Cynon Taf are economically inactive;
- 63.5% employment rate in Rhondda Cynon Taf (of persons aged 16-64 years) (Stats Wales).

2010-2011:

- 25.6% of all working age people in Rhondda Cynon Taf are economically inactive.

'Stats Wales' show a 2% decrease in the number of economically inactive working age people in Rhondda Cynon Taf from last year. The employment rate has increased to 70% during this period from the previous year and is the highest it has been since during the plan period. Since the beginning of the plan period both of these figures have seen improvement particularly the employment rate which has seen an increase of 7% since the beginning of the plan period.

7. Transport	
SA Target	SA Indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new developments located to support and encourage sustainable travel choices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % [or absolute number of] developments that deliver sustainable transport solutions. The 2011 Census Travel to work data. A measure of the increase in services and patronage of local bus services.
Monitoring Results	
<p>Sustainable Transport Solutions</p> <p>During the 2015-2016 monitoring period, there were a further 5 developments that delivered specific sustainable transport solutions. These were primarily for public transport provision schemes and a sustainable transport programme.</p> <p>The following results are from Local Indicator 10 (also shown above) which considers the proximity of new developments to existing transport and public transport services;</p> <p>April 2015 - March 2016</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 99.95% of all new houses permitted during 2015-2016 are accessible and within 400 metres of at least one or more transport mode. 92.3% (12 of 13), of all new employment permitted is accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport mode. The 13th unit is a farm diversification scheme. All new retail permitted (23 of 23) is accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport modes. <p>April 2014 - March 2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 99.89% of all new houses permitted during 2014-2015 are accessible and within 400 metres of at least one or more transport mode. 86.6% (13 of 15), of all new employment permitted is accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport mode. 	

- All new retail permitted (22 of 22) is accessible and within 400 metres of one or more transport modes.

These can be seen as the result of the successful allocation of sites within the LDP alongside a successful development management process in the County Borough.

Travel to Work.

The travel to work data is taken from the 2011 Census. Accordingly, there has been no update for 2015-16. For information, the data was as follows and sourced from a total of 172,047 residents between the ages of 16 and 74;

Private Car, Motorcycle/Taxi/Van - 46.0%

Public Transport - 4.8%

On Foot - 5.0%

Cycle/Other - 0.5%

Works at Home - 1.6%

The data indicated that a further 42.3% of those people surveyed are not in employment, for a variety of reasons.

The private car/motorcycle/ taxi/van was the highest of all transport used to travel to work. The LDP will continue to strive to approve development in sustainable locations and to give people the ability to travel by a variety of transport modes.

Local Bus Services and their patronage.

The number of local bus services has reduced from 71 to 67 since last year. The reduction in the number of services is a result of bus operators combining multiple services into one service number. A new service was introduced between Talbot Green and Llantwit Major during the monitoring period.

There are frequent requests from local residents for bus services to be introduced into new housing estates. Unfortunately, bus operators are often reluctant to serve the new estates, particularly those that only have a single access / egress point. It is suggested that this is because of the impact such diversions have on timetables.

The majority of local bus services are operated on a commercial basis. Due to the information being commercially sensitive, operators do not provided us with patronage data.

8. Built Environment	
<i>SA Target</i>	<i>SA Indicator</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote improved design standards and encourage community participation in the planning process. 	% (or number of) new developments and buildings meeting BREEAM and/or Code for Sustainable Homes Standards.
Monitoring Results	
<p>The specific statutory process of Codes for Sustainable Homes was removed during the monitoring year, and therefore is no longer monitored.</p>	

9. Landscape	
<i>SA Target</i>	<i>SA Indicator</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect the landscape value of Rhondda Cynon Taf. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Special Landscape Areas affected by development.
Monitoring Results	
<p>There were 6 new-build developments permitted within the designated Special Landscape Area's (SLAs) during 2015-2016 that are considered to have an effect on these landscapes. Two of these were for wind turbines and another for a solar farm. A further two were for a stable and ménage, whilst a further 2 small housing developments were also within SLAs. It was nevertheless determined that these were acceptable within the SLA.</p>	

10. Biodiversity	
<i>SA Target</i>	<i>SA Indicator</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect and enhance biodiversity and geo-diversity of the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of biological SSSI and SACs in County Borough with 1 or more qualifying features in an unfavourable condition status and the amount of Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINCs) lost to development and the number of mitigation schemes secured

	annually.
Monitoring Results	
<p>6 SINCs have been affected by proposed development permitted during 2015-2016. Three of the major developments are subject to mitigation measures including the offsetting of 130 hectares of land for management. Three other minor developments have affected less than 900 square metres of SINC, considered to be acceptable without mitigation measures required.</p> <p>NRW advised that the most recent monitoring results that there has been no change since last year's AMR. 15 biological (or mixed biological and geological) SSSI and 3 SAC in Rhondda Cynon Taf, indicate that 7 of the SSSI and 2 SAC have 1 or more of their qualifying features in an unfavourable condition. Conversely, 8 of the SSSI and 1 SAC have 1 or more of their qualifying features in a favourable condition. However, NRW, who undertake the assessments, state that the monitoring cycles are between 3 and 6 years depending on the habitat, so the status of some SSSI may have changed. The length of time of the monitoring cycle would mean that this indicator would remain amber.</p> <p>The Council will continue to monitor the target on the basis of the information available in relation to SINC and will take the opportunity to discuss with NRW how improved data can be obtained in relation to SSSI and SAC designations.</p>	

11. Water	
<i>SA Target</i>	<i>SA Indicator</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote sustainable water resource management. Reduce Flood risk to people, property and maintain integrity of the floodplain and avoid development in flood risk areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % [or number of as proportion of total] of new development of 5 dwellings or more with integrated sustainable drainage systems. Amount of new development in C1 and C2 as a proportion of the total development allowed contrary to TAN 15.
Monitoring Results	
<p>During 2015-2016, 932 dwellings were approved with sustainable drainage systems as part of their proposal. This was from a total of 1611 dwellings that were approved from applications of over 5 dwellings. This is just over half of such permissions, although many applications were for outline permissions where drainage detail was not yet forthcoming.</p>	

During 2015-2016, no highly vulnerable development was permitted in C2 flood-risk zones that did not meet all TAN 15 tests.

12. Climate Change

SA Target	SA Indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce greenhouse gas emissions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % change in per capita carbon dioxide emissions across industry/commercial, domestic, road transport and total CO₂.
Monitoring Results	

The Table below shows the Local Authority Carbon Dioxide Figures (September 2014) in tCO₂ this is the most up to date data for 2014 being the most recent, published in June 2016.

Rhondda Cynon Taf	Industry & commercial	Domestic	Transport	Total
2005	2.3	2.5	2.1	6.7
2006	2.3	2.5	2.1	6.8
2007	2.2	2.4	2.1	6.6
2008	2.0	2.4	2.0	6.4
2009	1.8	2.2	1.9	5.8
2010	1.9	2.3	1.9	6.0
2011	1.7	2.2	1.9	5.4
2012	1.7	2.1	1.9	5.6
2013	1.7	2.1	1.8	5.5
2014	1.6	1.7	1.9	5.4

According to the data available from DECC, the Co₂ emissions in RCT Borough per head of population has seen a continuous decrease since 2005. This has generally continued in recent years witnessing a steady decline. The most recent data from 2014 shows an overall decrease in total emissions with a slight increase in emissions from transport and a marked decrease in domestic CO₂ emissions. The data above has changed slightly since last year, with the figure being for all transport, instead of the 'road transport' figure for previous years.

13. Energy	
SA Target	SA Indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve energy efficiency and maximise the use of renewable energy. • Encourage energy efficient design in development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The capacity of Renewable Energy developments (MW) installed inside Strategic Search Areas by type per annum. • % [or number of as proportion of total] new developments and buildings meeting BREEAM and/or Code for Sustainable Homes Standards.
Monitoring Results	
<p>Energy Efficient Design</p> <p>The analysis of the results of new developments and buildings meeting BREEAM and/or Code for Sustainable Homes Standards are discussed above in SA Indicator 8.</p> <p>April 2015 – March 2016</p> <p>The specific statutory process of Codes for Sustainable Homes was removed during the monitoring year, and therefore it was no longer monitored.</p> <p>Renewable Energy</p> <p>During 2014-2015, a further wind turbine was installed at Bwllfa Farm, Ton Pentre, which is within the Strategic Search Area F (SSAF). This development has a generating capacity of 0.5 MW, however, during the early months of 2016, (up until the end of the AMR period in March), construction had progressed on approximately 16 of the 30 wind turbines approved in Rhondda Cynon Taf as part of the wider 'Pen Y Cymoedd' wind farm scheme.</p> <p>Solar energy schemes with the capacity to generate 20.81 MW were installed during 2015-2016.</p> <p>An anaerobic digestion facility also became operational in 2015-2016, with an</p>	

energy production capacity of **1 MW** and 24,000 tons of fertiliser.

During 2015-2016, planning permission was granted for **24.5 MW** of renewable energy capacity in the form of wind turbines, all within, or within 5 kilometres of SSAF.

A further **9 MW** of solar energy was approved within large solar farms, whilst a small scale hydro energy project was permitted, which would produce a further **0.3 MW** of energy.

14. Land and Soils	
SA Target	SA Indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase proportion of development on previously developed land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of new housing units provided during the year on previously developed land as a percentage of all new housing units provided during the year.
Monitoring Results	
<p>2010-2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 462 dwellings were completed of which 289 were on previously developed land, which is a percentage of 62.5%. <p>2011-2012</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 357 dwellings were completed of which 203 were on previously developed land, which is a percentage of 56.8%. <p>2012-2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 414 dwellings were completed of which 195 were on previously developed land, which is a percentage of 47.1%. <p>2013-2014</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 534 dwellings were completed of which 287 were on previously developed land, which is a percentage of 53.7%. <p>2014-2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 553 dwellings were completed of which 350 were on previously 	

developed land, which is a percentage of 63.3%.

2015-2016

- 569 dwellings were completed of which 213 were on previously developed land, which is a percentage of 37%.

The indicator suggests that there has been a decrease in residential development completions on brownfield or previously developed land over the past year from 63.3% to 37%. The LDP will continue to support the re-use of land for development.

15. Waste	
SA Target	SA Indicator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce tonnage of waste to landfill. • Move Waste up the Waste Hierarchy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of municipal wastes sent to landfill. • % of municipal waste reused and/or recycled.
Monitoring Results	
<p>April 2015 – March 2016</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22.59% of waste was landfilled; • 0.56% of waste was reused; • 46.29% of waste was recycled; • 25.95% of waste was subject to energy recovery; • 13.64% of waste was composted. <p>April 2014 – March 2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35.01% of waste was landfilled; • 0.56% of waste was reused; • 42.23% of waste was recycled; • 15.00% of waste was subject to energy recovery; • 11.28% of waste was composted. <p>April 2013 – March 2014</p>	

- 41.56% of waste was landfilled;
- 0.49% of waste was reused;
- 38.20% of waste was recycled;
- 9.14% of waste was subject to energy recovery;
- 10.61% of waste was composted.

April 2012 – March 2013:

- 38.4% of waste landfilled;
- 0.39% of waste reused;
- 35.18% of waste recycled;
- 17.42% of waste subject to energy recovery;
- 8.6% of waste composted.

The results of this indicator show a clear, positive reduction in the percentage of waste that was land filled reducing by approximately 14% from last year and conversely, a noted increase in that which was recycled. There has also been a marked increase in the amount of waste subject to energy recovery which has increased from 15% to just over 25%.

16. Minerals	
<i>SA Target</i>	<i>SA Indicator</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase % of secondary and recycled aggregate sources in all developments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent of primary land-won aggregates permitted in accordance with the Regional Technical Statement for Aggregates.
Monitoring Results	
<p>No primary land-won aggregates were permitted for extraction in 2015-2016, with aggregate production in Rhondda Cynon Taf continuing at Craig yr Hesk quarry in Pontypridd and at Hendy and Forest Wood quarries near Pontyclun.</p> <p>A full application for a Western extension to the existing Craig yr Hesk Quarry, Pontypridd is currently being considered by the Council. This is for the phased extraction of an additional 10 million tonnes of pennant sandstone and an overall restoration scheme for the quarry.</p>	

17. Air Quality						
SA Target			SA Indicator			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain and improve air quality. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % decrease in pollutants monitored through Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) (NOx, NO2, PM10). 			
Monitoring Result						
2011 – 2012	No. AQMAs	No. properties in AQMAs	Average NO2 in AQMAs	% change	Ave. Worst NO2 in AQMAs	% change
Rhondda	4	467	45.28	-10.43%	50.72	-4.12%
Cynon	3	313	41.05	-6.06%	47.64	0.72%
Taf	6	808	40.36	-14.49%	55.94	7.99%
Total	13	588	41.8	-11.81%	55.94	9.47%
2012 – 2013	No. AQMAs	No. properties in AQMAs	Average NO2 in AQMAs	% change	Ave. Worst NO2 in AQMAs	% change
Rhondda	4	453	46.98	3.8%	49.00	-3.4%
Cynon	3	381	37.36	-9.0%	45.27	-5.0%
Taf	6	825	36.34	-10.0%	46.08	-17.6%
Total	13	1659	40.23	-3.8%	46.78	-9.0%
2013 – 2014	No. AQMAs	No. properties in AQMAs	Average NO2 in AQMAs	% change	Ave. Worst NO2 in AQMAs	% change
Rhondda	4	453	59.61	26.9%	62.38	27.3%
Cynon	3	381	47.79	27.9%	59.40	31.2%

Taf	6	825	42.85	17.9%	56.88	23.4%
Total	13	1659	50.09	24.5%	59.55	27.3%
2014 – 2015	<i>No. AQMAs</i>	<i>No. properties in AQMAs</i>	<i>Average NO2 in AQMAs</i>	<i>% change</i>	<i>Ave. Worst NO2 in AQMAs</i>	<i>% change</i>
Rhondda	4	341	52.14	-12.5%	57.05	-8.5%
Cynon	3	500	41.21	-13.8%	52.47	-11.7%
Taf	7	396	40.80	-4.8%	46.94	-17.5%
Total	14	1237	44.72	-10.7%	52.15	-12.4%

2015 – 2016	<i>No. AQMAs</i>	<i>No. properties in AQMAs</i>	<i>Average NO2 in AQMAs</i>	<i>% change</i>	<i>Ave. Worst NO2 in AQMAs</i>	<i>% change</i>
Rhondda	4	341	51.23	-0.9%	52.29	-8.3%
Cynon	3	500	43.39	-5.3%	52.69	0.4%
Taf	8	403	39.68	-2.75%	44.91	-4.3%
Total	15	1244	44.76	0.9%	49.96	-4.2%

Although the actual numbers of Air Quality Management Areas has increased by one, this only represents an increase of 7 properties falling within AQMAs. Similarly, the overall average amount of NO₂ throughout the 15 areas has reduced by 4.2%. This is itself a good indication of the success of designating the AQMA's and managing them accordingly.

Detailed Compliance Review of Monitoring Proposals with SEA Directive

		Requirements of SEA Directive	Compliance	Reference to Proposed monitoring measures
	Monitoring measures			
1	Measures proposed for monitoring are clear, practicable and linked to the indicators and objectives used in the SEA.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 5 (1) i.	Yes	Yes
2	Monitoring is used, where appropriate, during implementation of the plan or programme to make good deficiencies in baseline information in the SEA.	Directive 2001/42/EC Article 10.	Yes	Yes
3	Monitoring enables unforeseen adverse effects to be identified at an early stage. (These effects may include predictions which prove to be incorrect).		Yes	Yes
4	Proposals are made for action in response to significant adverse effects.		Yes	Yes

6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The 2016 AMR is the fifth monitoring report to be prepared since the adoption of the LDP in March 2011. The findings of the AMR provide an important opportunity for the Council to assess the effectiveness of the Plan.
- 6.2 The monitoring framework for the Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP requires detailed consideration of 5 key factors. In addition to this, LDP Wales (2005) asks for 7 further factors to be considered when monitoring LDPs. Although broadly discussed above, the following section provides a conclusion of findings of the monitoring process, specifically addressing the requirements of these monitoring frameworks.

Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP Monitoring Framework

- 6.3 Responses to each of the assessment factors identified in the LDP are outlined below:
- 1) ***Has there been a significant change in national policy or legislation?***
- 6.4 There have been a number of relatively significant changes and proposed changes to national policy, guidance and legislation, which have been discussed in section 3 of this report. Primarily these include amendments to PPW, the LDP Manual (2015) and a raft of other primary legislation. Principally the Planning (Wales) Act; the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act; the Environment (Wales) Act and the Historic Environment (Wales) Act. As the Planning Act introduces a regional tier of planning, this will have future implications for collaborative working, as well as upon the role and function of future LDPs. That being said; given the present situation, these legislative and policy changes are not considered to be of a scale that would trigger an immediate review of the Plan. It is however acknowledged that this guidance will considerably alter the future local planning framework. It is not considered that these changes will directly affect the LDPs implementation; they are however being considered as part of the statutory revisions procedure.
- 2) ***Has there been a significant change in external conditions?***
- 6.5 No. It is not considered that there have been any significant external socio-economic contextual changes that have impacted on the implementation of the LDP. It is recognised however that there continues to be encouraging improvements in the economy and the house building industry.
- 6.6 The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation which was published at the end of 2014 shows that there has been little change in the South East Wales region and it remains the most deprived region in Wales. This is clearly a legacy which the LDP needs to continue to respond to through its proposals and policies.

6.7 Section 3 further outlines in detail the economic conditions in which the LDP is being implemented. There does appear to be an emerging recovery in the economy, as seen in the rise in house prices; the above average number of business births and the increased housing completions and permissions. The employment rate has increased to 70% during this period from the previous year and is the highest it has been through the plan period. The Council believes that as the economy continues to improve the LDP will provide a robust platform for the delivery of new housing and commercial development.

3) *Has there been a significant change in local context e.g. closure of a significant employment site that undermines the local economy or the cumulative effect of a series of closures?*

6.8 The impact of the global economic recession on the economy of Rhondda Cynon Taf has been a matter of particular concern. As Section 3 evidences, there was a reduction in development activity in both the housing and commercial sectors post 2008. Encouragingly, the results of the 2015-2016 monitoring exercise shows growth in both of these sectors. In particular, there has been considerable interest in the retail sector over the past few years. Permission was granted in May 2015 of this monitoring period for a 4,343m² (gross) supermarket on the Hirwaun Strategic Site. There has also been permission granted for supermarkets in the village of Hirwaun and on the Robertstown Strategic Site, both in the Northern Strategy Area. Plus over 50,000m² of commercial development which includes the new town centre at the Mwyndy Talbot Green Strategic Site and the local centre at the Llanilid Strategic Site in the Southern Strategy Area. Planning permission was also granted for 9,272m² of industrial development at Ensinger in Tonyrefail with the proposal for three business units. Therefore whilst the after effects of the recession still pose challenges for the implementation of the LDP, there is evidence of continued economic growth and investment in RCT.

6.9 Analysis of Core Policies 1 through to 5 in Section 4 of the report provides some encouraging analysis of the state of the housing sector in the County Borough. This year's results show the highest level of house-building since the adoption of the LDP, indicating that recovery in the housing market is ongoing.

6.10 The Council considers that the LDP provides an effective land use framework that will assist in the recovery of the local economy.

4) *Has there been a significant change in development pressures or needs and investment strategies of major public and private investors?*

6.11 Research contained in Section 3 suggests that the investment strategies for both the public and private sector continue to include funding development activities in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Investment from the public sector in 2015-2016 included continued support for a range of grant programmes and funding for town centre

regeneration schemes in Pontypridd and Aberdare. Pontypridd has seen grant approval for £6,480,000 from the Welsh Government's Vibrant and Viable Places Regeneration Framework and includes schemes such as Pontypridd Hub and Homestep Plus. Private sector investment in 2015-2016 has resulted in the development of 569 dwellings and further proposals approved for the development of 2,264 new dwellings.

5) Are there any significant concerns from the findings of the AMR in terms of policy effectiveness, site delivery, progress rates, and any problems with implementation?

6.12 The results of the LDP monitoring exercise are set out in Section 4. The findings of the monitoring process indicate that LDP targets in relation to Policies CS 2, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 9 and 10 are ongoing, being met or exceeded and policies CS 7 and 8 are partially being met. Targets that are not currently being achieved are policies CS 1, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4, 5 and 6. In the case of Policies CS 1, 3.1, 3.3, and 3.4 the Council is satisfied that the situation can be ameliorated without immediate intervention. The Council is concerned about the lack of progress in delivering the requirements of Policies CS 3.2-Fernhill Colliery Strategic Site, CS 4 - Housing Requirements, CS 5 - Affordable Housing and CS 6 - Employment Requirements, and will review the options available to it, to intervene and stimulate growth, and consider whether the most appropriate performance measures are being used.

6.13 The findings of the SA monitoring exercise are outlined in Section 5 of the AMR. The results indicate that overall, the plan is travelling in a positive direction for the majority of aspects of sustainability; these being the indicators for Employment, Health, Transport, Built Environment, Landscape, Water, Climate Change, Energy, Land/Soils, Air Quality and Waste. Indicators for Culture and Heritage and Communities are seeing some elements being met whilst others are not currently being achieved. The delivery of Housing is not wholly being met in line with the specific requirements of the Indicator, although as mentioned throughout this report, significant housing is being delivered.

6.14 1) Does the basic strategy remain sound (if not, a full plan review may be needed)?

The evidence collected as part of the annual monitoring process for 2015-2016 indicates that the LDP Strategy remains sound, effective and is for the most part being delivered. Whilst the impact of the global economic recession has meant that development in some areas was slower than envisaged, it remains our view that the LDP will provide a robust platform for sustainable economic growth and regeneration over the plan period. Considering also that the LDP will soon be entering its sixth year post adoption, the Council remains confident that many of the sites will be delivered, (as envisaged in the timetable of the LDP), over the remaining 5 years of the Plan period. Furthermore, the delivery of development across the north and south of the authority on unallocated sites continues and

helps significantly in achieving the aims of the Strategy. This is evidenced by the delivery of 4,465 new houses, of which 1,775 have been in the Northern Strategy Area. Even more encouraging, is the fact that 7,020 dwellings have been approved since the adoption of the plan in 2011, again with a significant 1,719 in the North. The fact that house building continues to increase is evidence that the plan framework is stimulating growth rather than acting as a barrier.

2) *What impact are the policies having globally, nationally, regionally and locally?*

6.15 As outlined previously the results of the SA monitoring exercise indicate that the LDP is travelling in a positive direction for most aspects of sustainability; particularly for Employment, Health, Transport, Built Environment, Landscape, Water, Climate Change, Energy, Land/Soils and Waste.

6.16 As discussed above, the LDP policies are continuing to have an improving effect on the availability, diversity and quality of housing stock across the County Borough. The permissions for new retail facilities within allocated sites are also broadening the availability and range of retail opportunities for the residents here. The sustainable location of these developments, as indicated in indicator LI 10 in relation to accessibility to transport modes other than private cars which was almost all for retail and residential permissions, and 12 of 13 employment permissions, will hopefully have a positive impact on local, national and global resources and sustainability.

3) *Do the policies need changing to reflect changes in national policy?*

6.17 As Section 3 indicates, there were a number of changes in national planning policy and guidance; many reflecting the recent legislative changes occurring during 2015-2016. As discussed in that section of the AMR and in response to section 1 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf LDP Monitoring Framework above; whilst these policy changes will undoubtedly need to be considered in relation to the LDP policies, they are of a scale that can be dealt with through an LDP review as required. The Council is however currently undertaking its statutory revisions process and these changes will be considered as part of that review. In the meantime however they will be given due consideration with regard to the development management decision-making process.

4) *Are policies and related targets in LDPs being met or progress is being made towards meeting them, including publication of relevant supplementary planning guidance (SPG)?*

6.18 The findings of the LDP and SA monitoring exercise are outlined in Sections 4 and 5 of the AMR.

The results of the LDP monitoring exercise indicate that good progress is being made in the delivery of most of the LDP targets. Whilst some concern has been expressed about the relatively slow delivery of some aspects of the Plan,

particularly in relation to the delivery of the LDP housing allocations and the interrelated provision of affordable housing, the Council remains confident that monitoring targets can be achieved without intervention especially as this year has seen further increase in the housing numbers built and permissions granted. The housing totals listed above in question 1 are evidence of this housing delivery and permissions across RCT. The Council is concerned about the lack of progress in developing the allocated land for employment and in delivering the Strategic Site at Fernhill and will look at the options available to address these issues. However it is not considered that allocating additional or alternative employment land is the solution.

6.19 As indicated above, the findings of the SA monitoring exercise indicate that overall, the plan is travelling in a positive direction for most aspects of sustainability; particularly for Employment, Health, Transport, Built Environment, Landscape, Water, Climate Change, Energy, Land/Soils and Waste. Indicators for Culture and Heritage and Communities are seeing some elements being met whilst others are not currently being achieved. The delivery of Housing is not wholly being met in line with the specific requirements of the Indicator, although as mentioned throughout this report, significant housing is being delivered.

5) *Where progress has not been made, what are the reasons for this and what knock on effects it may have?*

6.20 Inevitably the global economic recession has impacted on the operations of the housing and commercial markets. The reduction in new investment in housing and commercial development during the recession inevitably had an adverse impact on the delivery of some elements of the LDP.

6.21 However in terms of the Core Housing policies it is considered that the original housing need figure based on the 2008 household projections was too high. It is also increasingly clear that the LDP housing land requirements is unrealistically high. In common with other authorities in Wales with an adopted LDP, where the housing land requirement appears to be well above the construction industry's capacity to deliver, the residual method produces an annually increasing shortage, which despite the improved levels of house building activity, still presents an increasingly unattainable target each year.

6.22 Although the LDP policies and allocations remain until the appropriate stage of review whereby they can be amended, it should be accepted in principle that the updated household projections issued by Welsh Government in February 2014 are based on sound evidence and accordingly should have some weighting. Based on a broad calculation using these revised figures, 9,500 new dwellings will be needed to meet projected housing need between 2011 and 2031 and therefore a much lower annual build rate of around 600 dwellings per year would need to be built from here on.

6) What aspects, if any, of the LDP need adjusting or replacing because they are not working as intended or are not achieving the objectives of the strategy and/or sustainable development objectives; and

6.23 The Council will consider the results of this AMR as part of the statutory revisions procedure. Where targets are not being met evidence will be reviewed and any intervention required will be considered.

7) If policies or proposals need changing, what suggested actions are required to achieve this?

6.24 The Council will consider the results of this AMR as part of the statutory revisions procedure. Where targets are not being met evidence will be reviewed and any intervention required will be considered. Any necessary policy amendments will be made at the appropriate stage.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6.25 In the Council's opinion the LDP is making steady progress. Whilst the pattern of growth in some areas is slower than anticipated at adoption, evidence collected through the monitoring process clearly suggests that good progress is being made in the delivery of the majority of LDP targets. The Council believes that the development which has taken place in Rhondda Cynon Taf since adoption, coupled with the projected future investment from the public and private sector will ensure that the LDP core strategy is successfully delivered.

COMPLIANCE

6.26 The review found that the work undertaken to date on the Rhondda Cynon Taf AMR meets the requirements of the SEA Directive and current guidance. It also provides a foundation for assessing the effectiveness of the LDP in delivering sustainable development in the County Borough.

6.27 Details of the compliance assessment are contained at the end of Section 5.

Appendix 1 – Status of LDP Allocations-add new table

Status of LDP Allocations				
Northern Strategy Area				
Policy	Location	Allocation Type	Delivery Period Expected	2016 Status Update
Strategic Sites				
NSA 4	Former Maerdy Colliery Site, Rhondda Fach	Strategic Site	2018-2021	Planning permission granted for new access as part of wind farm proposal with significant investment in leisure elements secured through S.106.
NSA 5	Former Fernhill Colliery Site, Blaenrhondda	Strategic Site	2014-2017	There has been previous pre-application discussion for mixed employment and residential uses on the site and outdoor pursuits use.
NSA 6	Former Phurnacite Plant, Abercwmboui	Strategic Site	2014-2017	Early, ongoing pre-application discussions. An initial master-plan and brief for the site has been produced
NSA 7	Land at Robertstown / Abernant, Aberdare	Strategic Site	2010-2013	<p>Robertstown: outline planning permission was granted on 31/03/15 for a supermarket.</p> <p>Permission granted for a college campus and the development has commenced on the employment element of the site.</p> <p>Abernant: the new landowner is actively preparing to dispose of the site to house builders who are keen to develop the site.</p>
NSA 8	Land South of Hirwaun	Strategic Site	2018-2021	Planning permission granted with s106 agreement for a supermarket and access improvements. The open-casting of the major part of the development site and its subsequent restoration will allow for the development of the site in the near future.

Housing				
NSA 9.1	Land South of Rhigos Road, Hirwaun.	Housing	2014-2017	No proposals further to the LDP.
NSA 9.2	Land East of Trenant, Penywaun.	Housing	2018-2021	No proposals further to the LDP.
NSA 9.3	Land South East of Llwydcoed Community Centre.	Housing	2010-2013	No proposals further to the LDP.
NSA 9.4	Site including the old brick works, old dairy and tipped land rear of Birchwood, Llwydcoed	Housing	2010-2013	The site benefits from full planning permission and major parts of the allocation are developed.
NSA 9.5	Tegfan Farm, Potters Field, Trecynon.	Housing	2014-2017	No proposals further to the LDP.
NSA 9.6	Land at Nant y Wenallt, Abernant Road, Abernant.	Housing	2010-2013	No proposals further to the LDP.
NSA 9.7	Land bordered by Cefnpennar Road and Phillip Row, Cwmbach.	Housing	2014-2017	No proposals further to the LDP.
NSA 9.8	Dyffryn Row, Cwmbach.	Housing	2014-2017	Progress with a planning application for the first phase (5 dwellings).
NSA 9.9	Remainder of Ynyscynon Farm, Cwmbach.	Housing	2018-2021	Outline planning application for 77 dwellings on 3.29 hectares has been approved subject to completion of a section 106 agreement, but is now subject to an undecided non-determination appeal.
NSA	Land to the end of	Housing	2010-	The site benefits from outline planning permission. Further

9.10	Godreaman Street, Godreaman.		2013	discussions have taken place on the details of a future reserved matters application. Proposals have been submitted to discharge conditions and separate proposals have been submitted to extend the life of the consent.
NSA 9.11	Gwernifor Grounds, Mountain Ash.	Housing	2010-2013	The proposal has been implemented.
NSA 9.12	Land rear of Maerdy Road, Maerdy.	Housing	2018-2021	No proposals further to the LDP.
NSA 9.13	Land at Gwernllwyn Terrace, Tylorstown.	Housing	2018-2021	No proposals further to the LDP.
NSA 9.14	Site off Fenwick Street, Pontygwaith.	Housing	2018-2021	No proposals further to the LDP.
NSA 9.15	Old hospital site and school playground, Treherbert.	Housing	2018-2021	An outline planning application for 43 dwellings on the 1.83 hectares site has a resolution for approval subject to a section 106 agreement.
NSA 9.16	Site at the end of Mace Lane, Treorchy.	Housing	2018-2021	A draft development brief has been prepared. No proposals further to the LDP.
NSA 9.17	Site off Cemetery Road, Treorchy.	Housing	2018-2021	No proposals further to the LDP.
NSA 9.18	Hospital Site, Llwynypia.	Housing	2014-2017	Outline planning permission for residential development was renewed on 11/12/14.
NSA 9.19	Land at Park Street, Clydach Vale.	Housing	2018-2021	No proposals further to the LDP.
NSA 9.20	Land at Dinas Road / Graig Ddu Road, Dinas	Housing	2018-2021	No proposals further to the LDP.
NSA	Land at	Housing	2018-	No proposals further to the LDP.

9.21	Catherine Crescent, Cymmer.		2021	
Employment/Retail				
NSA 14.1	Ferndale & Highfield Industrial Estate, Maerdy.	Employment	2018-2021	Outline planning permission granted for a mixed use scheme in May 2016.
NSA 14.2	North of Fifth Avenue, Hirwaun Industrial Estate, Hirwaun.	Employment	2018-2021	Full planning permission for a 'sustainable waste resource recovery and energy production park' granted 21/12/10. Development commenced in the 2015-2016 monitoring period.
NSA 14.3	Land at Former Mayhew Chicken Factory, Trecynon.	Employment	2018-2021	No proposals further to the LDP, although pre-application enquiries for mixed-use development have been made.
NSA 14.4	Cae Mawr Industrial Estate, Treorchy.	Employment	2018-2021	Hybrid planning application for full permission for a supermarket and outline permission for B1/B2/B8 development was withdrawn 09/10/14.
NSA 17.1	Land at Oxford Street, Mountain Ash.	Retail	2018-2021	No proposals further to the LDP.
NSA 17.1	Strategic Site 5: Land South of Hirwaun	Retail	2018-2021	Planning permission granted with s106 agreement for a supermarket and access improvements.
All Other Allocations				
NSA 20.1	Mountain Ash Southern Cross Valley Link	Transport		A new planning application is expected to be submitted imminently. The scheme is included in the SE Wales Valleys LTP. Design is being progressed for an east-west highway link via an upgraded junction on the A4059.
NSA 20.2	Upper Rhondda	Transport		No proposals further to the LDP.

	Fach Relief Road			Scheme included in the SE Wales Valleys LTP.
NSA 20.3	Mountain Ash Northern Cross Valley Link	Transport		<p>No proposals further to the LDP.</p> <p>Scheme included in the SE Wales Valleys LTP. Initial traffic study has commenced.</p> <p>Reviewed as part of the development of the southern link, however, the southern link has been prioritised for delivery.</p>
NSA 21.1	Strategic Site 5: Land South of Hirwaun; (P&R)	Transport		Park and Ride provision included within Cynon Gateway scheme included in the SE Wales Valleys LTP.
NSA 21.2	Land south of Ty Trevithick, adjacent to A470, Abercynon; (P&R)	Transport		Complete.
NSA 21.3	Expansion of existing park and ride facilities, Robertstown. (P&R)	Transport		Development proposal as included in LDP complete - potential for further expansion as patronage is expected to increase with Metro proposals, and the existing facilities are likely to reach capacity within the next two years.
NSA 22	Rail Network and Station Improvements Hirwaun.	Transport		<p>No proposals further to the LDP. Scheme included in Network Rail's Welsh Route Study.</p> <p>Potential extension and conversion of the freight line to accommodate rail passenger services is under review as part of the Metro proposals.</p>

NSA 23.1	The Rhondda Community Route Network	Cycle Routes		<p>Scheme included in the SE Wales Valleys LTP. The Rhondda Tunnel Society has secured funding from Welsh Government to commission study into condition of the Blaencwm Tunnel to enable a business case for re-opening tunnel to be prepared as an extension of the network into Neath Port Talbot area.</p> <p>Funding has been allocated to enable feasibility/design work focussing on access to schools, stations etc which can form the basis of a wider community route along the Rhondda Fawr.</p> <p>Requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 may identify new route proposals.</p>
NSA 23.2	The Cynon Valley Cycle Route	Cycle Routes		<p>Phase 3 of scheme included in the SE Wales Valleys LTP - 'filling the missing gaps' along route.</p> <p>Requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 may identify new route proposals.</p>
NSA 23.3	The Heads of the Valley Cycleway & links to Hirwaun Industrial Estate	Cycle Routes		<p>Implementation of a route is complete however, this is potential for further enhancements linked to the A465 dualling.</p> <p>Requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 may identify new route proposals. .</p>
NSA 23.4	Pontygwaith to Maerdy	Cycle Routes		<p>Scheme included in the SE Wales Valleys LTP.</p> <p>Requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 may identify new route proposals.</p>
NSA 23.5	Cwmaman to Aberaman	Cycle Routes		<p>Scheme included in the SE Wales Valleys LTP.</p> <p>Requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 may identify new</p>

				route proposals.
NSA 23.6	Lady Windsor to Llanwonno	Cycle Routes		No further development proposals beyond LDP proposals. Requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 may identify new route proposals.
NSA 27	Land Reclamation Schemes	Land Reclamation		The following schemes have been completed: Aberaman colliery land reclamation scheme.
NSA 28	Coleg Morgannwg, Trecynon	Education		The ongoing development of the new College at Robertstown is likely to lead to the closure of this College campus at Trecynon, making this allocation for its extension no longer required.
Southern Strategy Area				
Policy	Location	Allocation Type	Delivery Period Expected	Status
Strategic Sites				
SSA 7	Former Cwm Colliery and Coking Works, Tyn-y-Nant, Pontypridd.	Strategic Site	2014-2017	Outline planning permission for demolition of structures, retention of listed towers, site remediation, land restoration and development to provide a mix of uses including 851 residential units, primary school, revised access arrangements, car and cycle parking, servicing, structural landscaping, formation of public spaces and associated infrastructure, and public realm works was granted on 30/12/14.
SSA 8	Mwyndy / Talbot Green Area	Strategic Site	2014-2021	Talbot Green: outline planning permission was granted on 24/12/14 for a new town centre comprising: a 10,801sq m gross foodstore; petrol filling station; 35,522 sq m gross retail floor

				<p>space; 600 sq m gross cafe space; 1,000 sq m financial/professional service space; 2,390 sq m gross food and drink space; 1,400 sq m gross office space (Class B1); 750 sq m gross Class D1 space; cinema; hotel; 64 dwellings; car parking; access, re-profiling of land, landscaping and flood alleviation works.</p> <p>Full planning permission was granted on 27/11/13 for phase 1 of the above, comprising a supermarket, service yard, car park, petrol filling station, customer access road and access from A473. Implementation is underway.</p> <p>Cefn Yr Hendy; Detailed Pre-application discussions have taken place on the residential element of the Strategic Site.</p> <p>Mwyndy: No proposals further to the LDP have taken place on the employment element.</p>
SSA 9	Former OCC Site, Llanilid (part)	Strategic Site	2010-2013	<p>Planning permission approved including a section 106 16/07/15 of a hybrid planning application for outline permission for comprehensive development comprising: up to 1,850 dwellings; neighbourhood centre to include community /leisure facilities, medical centre primary school, retail /services/food and drink floor-space; B1 office/commercial floor-space; drainage, services, transport and highways infrastructure, strategic landscape areas and public open space and full permission for spine road and access onto A473, drainage and development plateaus to serve the first phase of</p>

				development.
Housing				
SSA 10.1	Cefn Lane, Glyncoch.	Housing	2014-2017	No proposals further to the LDP.
SSA 10.2	Trane Farm, Tonyrefail.	Housing	2010-2013	Resolution to grant outline planning permission.
SSA 10.3	Collenna Farm, Tonyrefail.	Housing	2014-2017	Historic planning permission remains extant.
SSA 10.4	Bryngolau, Tonyrefail.	Housing	2014-2017	No proposals further to the LDP.
SSA 10.5	Site of the former Hillside Club, Capel Hill, Tonyrefail.	Housing	2014-2017	Outline planning permission was renewed in May 2014.
SSA 10.6	Land east of Mill Street, Tonyrefail.	Housing	2014-2017	No proposals further to the LDP.
SSA 10.7	Land at Gwern Heulog, Coed Ely.	Housing	2010-2013	Outline permission for residential development of the whole site (132 dwellings) and full permission for 54 dwellings were both granted 22/03/13.
SSA 10.8	Land rear of Tylcha Wen Terrace, Tonyrefail.	Housing	2018-2021	No proposals further to the LDP.
SSA 10.9	Land part of Tylcha Ganol Farm, south of Mill Street, Tonyrefail.	Housing	2018-2021	No proposals further to the LDP.
SSA 10.10	Land east of Hafod Wen and North of Concorde Drive, Tonyrefail.	Housing	2014-2017	No proposals further to the LDP.
SSA 10.11	Land south of Brynna Road, Brynna.	Housing	2010-2013	Pre-application discussions have been held but the site is constrained

				by lack of sewer capacity.
SSA 10.12	Land east of Dolau County Primary School, Bridgend Road, Bryncae	Housing	2010-2013	Proposal was completed in 2014-15.
SSA 10.13	West of Llechau, Llanharry.	Housing	2014-2017	Proposal was completed in 2014-15.
SSA 10.14	Penygawsi, Llantrisant.	Housing	2010-2013	No proposals further to the LDP.
SSA 10.15	Land south of Brynteg Court, Beddau.	Housing	2010-2013	Implementation is well underway.
SSA 10.16	The Link Site, Pen-yr-Eglwys, Church Village	Housing	2010-2013	No proposals further to the LDP.
SSA 10.17	Glyntaff Farm, Rhydyfelin.	Housing	2014-2017	Part of site (15 dwellings) is implemented. Remainder of site (65 dwellings): no proposals further to the LDP.
SSA 10.18	Land south of The Ridings, Tonteg and east of Station Road, Church Village.	Housing	2010-2013	Implementation is well underway.
Employment/Retail				
SSA 14.1	Coed Ely, Tonyrefail.	Employment	2018-2021	No proposals further to the LDP.
SSA 14.2	Land south of Gellihirion Industrial Estate, Pontypridd.	Employment	2018-2021	No proposals further to the LDP.

SSA 15.1	Land adjacent to Pontypridd Retail Park. Either for comparison goods sales or for convenience goods sales	Retail	2018-2021	Proposal is complete.
SSA 15.2	Strategic Site 8: Former OCC Site, Llanilid, Llanharan.	Retail	2018-2021	Planning permission approved including a section 106 16/07/15 of a hybrid planning application for outline permission for comprehensive development comprising: up to 1,850 dwellings; neighbourhood centre to include community /leisure facilities, medical centre primary school, retail /services/food and drink floor-space; B1 office/commercial floor-space; drainage, services, transport and highways infrastructure, strategic landscape areas and public open space and full permission for spine road and access onto A473, drainage and development plateaus to serve the first phase of development.
SSA 15.3	Land east of Mill Street, Tonyrefail.	Retail	2018-2021	No proposals further to the LDP.
All Other Allocations				
SSA18.1	A473 Llanharan Bypass	Transport		Resolution to approve with Scheme included in the SE Wales Valleys LTP. Potential for early scheme development is under review.
SSA 18.2	A473 Talbot Green Bypass Dualling	Transport		Enhancements to key junctions has commenced.
SSA 19	Rail Network and Station Improvements	Transport		No proposals further to the LDP. Various schemes included in the second National Transport Plan for Wales.

SSA 20	Park and Ride/Park and Share Provision	Transport		<p>Development proposed in the LDP is complete. Taffs Well is recognised as a key node in the transport network and further enhancements are envisaged with the Metro/City Deal proposals.</p> <p>Construction of Park & Ride facility at Porth station is complete and has opened to users. Further extension to the facility is under development.</p> <p>The SE Wales Valleys LTP contains proposed schemes to further increase capacity at Taffs Well and to increase capacity at Pontyclun and Treforest stations, which are likely to reach capacity within the next two years.</p> <p>There is also pressure at Llanharan station - feasibility work is ongoing to identify potential for expansion of park and ride facilities.</p>
SSA 21.1	Treforest Connect 2	Cycle Routes		<p>Completed.</p> <p>Requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 may identify improvements to existing routes or new route proposals.</p>
SSA 21.2	Extension of Connect 2 scheme to Pontypridd,	Cycle Routes		<p>Completed.</p> <p>Requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 may identify improvements to existing routes or new route proposals.</p>
SSA 21.3	Maesycloed to Porth	Cycle Routes		<p>Completed.</p> <p>Requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 may identify improvements to existing routes or new route proposals.</p>
SSA 21.4	Glyntaff to Nantgarw	Cycle Routes		<p>Completed.</p> <p>Requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 may identify improvements to existing routes or</p>

				new route proposals.
SSA 21.5	Trallwn to Cilfynydd	Cycle Routes		<p>Scheme included in the SE Wales Valleys LTP</p> <p>Requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 may identify improvements to existing routes or new route proposals.</p>
SSA 21.6	Pontypridd to Tonyrefail via Llantrisant	Cycle Routes		<p>Two sections complete. Third section - planning application has been approved, funding has been allocated to progress with the route from the western end towards Cross Inn during 2016-17. Initial site survey work undertaken.</p> <p>Requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 may identify improvements to existing routes or new route proposals.</p>
SSA 21.7	Gyfeillion to Llanwonno	Cycle Routes		<p>No further development proposals beyond LDP proposals.</p> <p>Requirements of the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 may identify new route proposals.</p>
SSA 24	Land Reclamation Schemes	Land Reclamation		<p>The following schemes have been completed:</p> <p>Coed Ely reclamation aftercare scheme Tonyrefail</p> <p>Ablion lower tips land reclamation scheme Cilfynydd</p> <p>Cefn-yr-Hendy land reclamation scheme miskin</p> <p>Need an update.</p>
SSA 26	Land at Beddau Caravan Park	Housing		Proposal is implemented.

